

BARBARA STEELE
Her Career in Profile

Arthur Lake: Blondie's "Dagwood"

FILM FAX

The Magazine of Film & Television

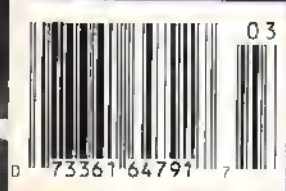
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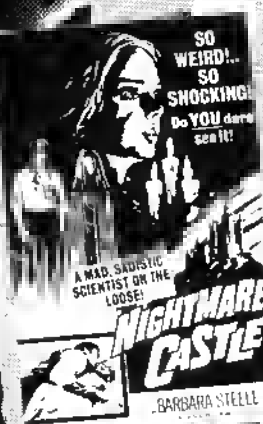
CASTLE OF BLOOD (1964) George Riviere, Margarete Robsahm. A writer is challenged to spend the night in a castle haunted by the ghosts of murdered souls. He witnesses an array of bizarre, supernatural happenings throughout the course of his eerie stay. Barbara plays Elizabeth Blackwood, the beautiful, mysterious woman with no heartbeat. A chilling, atmospheric tale of the living and the dead. Supernatural horror at its very best.

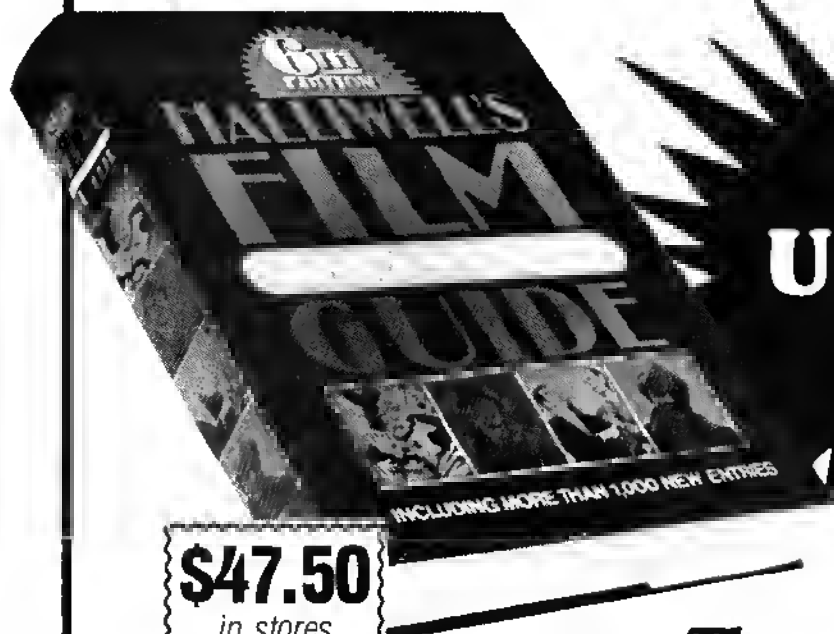
LONG HAIR OF DEATH (1964) Giorgio Ardisson, Robert Rains. In the beginning of the film, Barbara's mother is burned at the stake, falsely accused of murder. Barbara herself is later murdered by an evil count, but she returns from the dead in a terrific scene in which her tomb is split open by a bolt of lightning, revealing a worm-eaten face. Barbara combines eroticism and vengeance against the men who have wronged her. An extremely atmospheric horror film much in the **BLACK SUNDAY** tradition.

NIGHTMARE CASTLE (1965) Paul Miller, Helga Lind. Erik Batteaglia. Barbara has a dual role in one of her best horror films. She's caught having an affair with a gardener by her mad, seductive husband. He tortures them, disfigures them, electrocutes them, then uses their blood to restore the beauty of his aging mistress. He then marries his dead wife's cousin (also played by Barbara) so he can control her fortune. In a sensational climax, his dead first wife and her badly decomposed gardener lover return from the grave to seek their grisly revenge. Don't miss it!

THE SHE-BEAST (1965) John Karlson, Mel Welles, Ian Ogilvy. Barbara plays a newlywed, honeymooning with her hubby in Transylvania. They spend the night at an inn where her husband beats up the innkeeper for peeping in on them during a moment of sexual passion. They hastily leave the inn in their little yellow Volkswagen bug. They crash into a lake where a monstrous witch was drowned by villagers 200 years before. When Barbara re-emerges from the sunken car, she's become the hideous witch, come to life again. A fast moving, well made European horror film.

TERROR CREATURES FROM THE GRAVE (1965) Walter Brad, Marilyn Mitchell. A wealthy occultist living in a small European village is murdered by his unfaithful wife (Barbara) and a number of prominent townspeople who he's threatened to ruin. Years later he returns from the grave to seek his revenge on all of those who betrayed him. He summons the decayed corpses of medieval plague victims who return from the dead and do his dirty work for him. Anyone they touch dies immediately from plague. Pretty grisly stuff. Barbara looks stunning as usual.





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Michael Stein

EDITORS

Michael Stein

Sharon Lind Williams

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

David J. Hogan

GOLDEN AGE EDITOR

Forrest J. Ackerman

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

John Burns

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Allan Asherman

Gary Coville

Bill Ferit

Rudolph Gray

Jan Alan Henderson

David J. Hogan

Don Leifert

Patrick Luciano

Ted Newsom

Ted Okuda

Tom Sciaccia

James Singer

Bob Skotak

Al Taylor

Bill Warren

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HISTORICAL ORACLE

For the skillful thespian, fame becomes an occupational hazard. Actors spend a lifetime pretending to be someone else—and the price paid is often one of personal identity. Especially when fans confuse the actor with the mask, identifying him or her with a role rather than as an individual. Ironically, however, an actor's personal life can sometimes prove to be more dramatic than fiction.

Commonly, *Filmfax* is seen as a magazine about movies and television. More accurately, *Filmfax* is a magazine about *people*, individuals involved with the world of cinematic make-believe. *Filmfax* strives to uncover that personal truth, cutting through the fantasy to reveal the human stories beneath the skin of this celluloid art form.

Many of the films and personalities covered in these pages have been examined already in other magazines and sourcebooks. A casual reader might even assume that there could be little left to add to some topics. That is the *Filmfax* challenge. Casting, scripting, cinematography, special effects, etc. are a film's basic building blocks. But there are also political influences, social mores and technical



advances that temper the framework of every film. In that sense, *Filmfax* is a history book as well as an entertainment magazine.

This issue of *Filmfax* presents a strong argument for our "historical purpose." Forrest J. Ackerman takes us back to 1924, when movies were pure images, recalling the impact that they had on his young mind. Respected actor William Bakewell also remembers working on the last great silent epic, *The Iron Mask*, with Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., as well as shedding light on the personal life of one of the silent era's true geniuses. Special effects, 1920s-style are also illustrated in detail.

Next, we skip across time to the 1940s where Arthur Lake (Blondie's bungling husband Dagwood) helps post-WW2 America regain its domestic stability with a little comedy relief. TV Space Ranger *Rocky Jones* then rockets us into the 1950s, documenting how many McCarthy Era kids got their first taste of Cold War propaganda, disguised as a space opera. We'll also confront a mutant sea monster with world-conquering ideas, created from the paranoid fallout of our early atomic blasts. Finally, you'll learn more about a distinguished actress who had to come to terms with her former fame as a B-movie "horror queen." Each of these unique articles contains its own historical lessons, taken from the time-line of motion picture history.

But the one thing we don't want you to find in *Filmfax* is a long-winded, self-indulgent editorial, so before this one gets out-of-hand, let's pause for a few words from our sponsors...the readers.

—Sharon Lind Williams, Editor

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BATMAN STATS & OTHER CONGRATS

Congratulations. Issues #16 and #17 of *Filmfax* represent possibly the finest examples of the print medium since the invention of movable type. Your choice of cover features indicates a degree of taste and refinement akin to the days of the Renaissance.

Seriously, I am proud to be among the line-up of contributors to *Filmfax*. Each issue is packed with the kind of in-depth coverage that I love to read.

I was going to comment on the typos in my "Batman" piece—until I discovered a whopper of a formatting error (future-type talk for a nasty editing mistake) on my own word processor. Robert Lowery did not get turned into the Creeper in *The Brute Man*—and at this juncture I can't recall what I was getting at, but when I chopped two graphs down I inadvertently produced a paragraph that still made sense but only in the *language* sense.

Additionally, here are a few further notes on "Batman." The Lee Zahler score was based upon passages in Wagner's "Rienzi," a piece best known for its appearance in Leon Schlesinger cartoons.

I must temper my incredulity at the cliffhanger in which Batman simply walked away unhurt from a nasty plane crash. Several recent real plane crashes in the news had similar miraculous survivors, and I can hardly fault Columbia for presaging such events (especially

in light of my lenient attitude toward the serial in general).

I can't wait for the next issue of *Filmfax*. Reading it is almost as much fun as writing for it.

—Charles Lee Jackson, II
Hollywood, CA

N("AUSSIE")STRODAMUS

I've just spent the best part of a day devouring *Filmfax* #17 and have to remark that it was the best issue of any zine I've opened this year. Chris Stone's FJA interview made fascinating reading, while Gary Knox deserves a pat on the back for his incisive discussion with Michael D. Stein. I was lucky enough to meet FJA at Aussiecon '85 and it's great to see that the future of his collection appears to be in safe hands. I trust you'll continue to update information concerning the well-being of FJA and the collection.

At last! An article on Richard Webb! I think I may have requested this in an earlier letter, but I never expected you to actually come up with one. Great to finally see some pics from the various episodes, but the actual interview I found to be a disappointment, superficial with lots of questions going unanswered. A local nostalgia series producer came up with a far superior one last year when he interviewed both Richard Webb and Sid Melton. For example, who designed the "look" of the TV series and what happened to Olan Soule? What about some pics of the lab, and the jet? I hope you do some

type of follow-up on the actual show, giving an episode guide in particular, as I've never seen one.

Dare I ask for the same in respect of *Rocky Jones*, *Space Ranger*?

Still, a great issue, *The Day* article and following one on Michael Rennie were great. Although *Filmfax* only appears in several specialty shops in Sydney, it appears to outsell *Starlog* by at least 3 to 1, if that's any consolation.

—John Tipper
Sydney, Australia

[Editor's Note: Speaking of Rocky Jones, Space Ranger, we hope you like this issue, John. Actually, it is kind of amazing. First you wish for an interview with Captain Midnight, then an extensive article on the RJSR series. Are we in the same orbit or what? As they say in LalaCaca Land, "Fer sure, Dude!"]

TYP-O (GRAPHIC) TRANS(CON)FUSION

Nobody's perfect, but come on, guys. What happened to my Michael Rennie career article? I wrote it, but when I first attempted to read it, I found that some of the copy was not where it belonged. To paraphrase some of Rennie's dialogue in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, I must admit I was more than a little confused. And so, as a public service to *Filmfax* readers, here's a key to read the article the way it should have appeared.

When you reach the end of page 76 ("In the role of the King, which"), turn to the top left col-

umoster frazis snaps of the dirty pakalomer. Oooops! Sorry Allan... (Actually, the correct copy begins reading on the next line below.)

umn of page 78 ("earned Rennie fifth billing"), and read that column until you finish "Sanatorium," started Jean Simmons and... Then start reading the beginning of page 77. At the end of the page (after "straightforward manner would have") return to page 78 and begin with the line "worked against much of the character," in the first column. From there, just read straight through to the end.

This is the first time I recall needing a road map to read a magazine article.

There are many other errors in *Filmfax* #17, and two of these really stand out. In Charles Lee Jackson, II's *Science Fiction Theatre* article, Barry Sullivan is credited as the next-door neighbor in "Time is Just a Place." Sullivan never appeared in the series. That role was played by Warren Stevens, a marvelous actor who most fans remember as "Dr. Ostrow" in *Forbidden Planet*. (Stevens is correctly credited in the *S. F. Theatre* program log compiled by Gary Coville and Patrick Luciano.)

Also, the bottom left photo on page 54 shows Ann Robinson as Juliandra, not Anne Baxter as the caption indicates.

Filmfax is a wonderful magazine for people who grew up during the 1950s, and those too young to remember vintage material when it was new, but with the good taste to want to learn more about it (especially with so much of it now available on videotape). But as long as such errors occur, the magazine's credibility will suffer. As one of the loyal readers of *Filmfax*, I hope that people reading future issues will find much wonderful information, not misinformation.

—Allan Asherman
Hoboken, NJ

MISS INFORMATION? (Or JUST THE BARE FACTS?)

Many thanks to contributor Charles Chamberlin for correcting my oversight in failing to mention Nina Bara's contribution to the "Space Woman" subgenre of fantasy films and television. As an example of villainy encased in beauty, Bara's certainly in the top ten most wanted list of any interplanetary crime fighting squad.

Extra-celestial credit should also go to ex-*Queen of Outer Space* performers Laurie Mitchell and Tania Velia who appeared in *Missile to the Moon* as Bara's fellow Moon Gals.

—James Singer
Jackson Heights, NY

ROCKY BEGINNINGS

While I was growing up back in the middle 1960s, afternoon hours would almost always find me sitting...

Continued on next page

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ting in front of the television set watching a long-gone program called *Twilight Movie*. This is where I got my first taste of science fiction, watching *Queen of Outer Space*, *Target Earth*, *World Without End* and others. And it was here that I discovered the interstellar adventures of *Rocky Jones, Space Ranger*.

To me this was the ultimate in outer space adventure. It was as if one of my favorite old comic books had been brought to life. I spent many a sunny summer day sitting and watching while the spaceship Orbit Jet carried Rocky and his crew across light years of space to some far distant sun or alien world. With the advent of the VCR and video cassettes I can re-watch some of those old shows and re-live some long-forgotten memories.

But despite my efforts over the years I haven't been able to find any background information on this show. Maybe I haven't looked in the right place, I don't know.

I was very impressed by your extensive coverage of *Space Patrol* in issues #9 and #10. I would like to see the same *Filmfax* treatment given to Rocky Jones and his other Ranger friends. I am sure I'm not the only reader who would like to see this. How about it?

—Charles Costa
Baltimore, MD

[Ed. Note: Ya, how about it, Charles? Turn to page 50 immediately, please.]

SUPER SERIOUS ABOUT HIS COMEDY

Daniel Volk had his feelings hurt by my review of his book *The Films of the Stooges*. This was not my intention. My intention was to save my fellow comedy buffs ten bucks.

He starts by defending his lack of photos by blaming Columbia. Perhaps Volk should brush up on his legalities; promo pix that pre-date 1977 are supposed to be in the public domain—in fact, thousands are sold worldwide to collectors.

He then defends his limiting the text to those films which feature Curly by stating that his book was not an attempt at a comprehensive volume. That's fine if he's planning to use these titles as examples of the Stooges at their best, worst, whatever, but all he gives us are plotlines. And if this is indeed a book for "Serious scholars of Stoogology" then it is assumed his readers will have seen the films and don't need to merely be told what happens in them.

He defends his plotline-only text by comparing his work to William K. Everson's *The Films of Laurel and Hardy*, which is sort of like comparing Curly to Joe DeRita. Perhaps a quick re-reading of the Everson book will show Volk that Everson included sharp critical comments for each film, analyses on the comic structure of the team, a wealth of rare photos, and even more information that was, at that time, new to Laurel and Hardy fans. It wasn't just a plotline for

each Laurel and Hardy two reeler without photos save for a front cover suitable for coloring.

But what rankled me the most is Volk's offhand accusation that I gave kudos to *The Columbia Comedy Shorts* simply because co-author is a *Filmfax* contributor. My reason was because Okuda and Ed Watz's book is indeed the best source on the Stooges available.

And while Daniel Volk can't recall ever having seen a negative review in *Filmfax* prior to his book, I must bring him down one notch further by stating that, yes, there have been a few. Volk can still feel "special" though—of the 40-odd book reviews I've written, his was the first effort about which I just couldn't find anything nice to say. Perhaps next time I really shouldn't "bother with a self-published limited edition book such as (his)."

—James L. Neibaur
Racine, WI

ANGRY PINK ON RED PLANET

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the article on me and my *Angry Red Planet* that appears in your magazine of November, 1989. While I appreciate the effort and the blanket coverage, I must object to the too many misstatements of fact, and the heroic picture of an inept Mr. Melchior. Reading the sources quoted, I could not help but be amazed at the lack of any attempt to consult with me, as the center

figure of the story. I am the managing editor of the *Coconut Creek Tribune*, and I know that as the Editor, I would have checked the facts with the principal before printing. However, your timing could have not have been better since this article coincides with the release of my book this month. It is titled *So You Want To Make Movies*, published by Pineapple Press of Sarasota, Florida. The book has been saluted by such stars as Robert Stack, Tom Bosley, Rory Cathoun and Arnold Kopelson, the producer of *Platoon*, who worked with me. I am sure that the readers of the book will appreciate the true version of the production of *Angry Red Planet*.

—Sid Pink
Coconut Creek, FL

AFTER MIDNIGHT

I enjoyed the Richard Webb-Captain Midnight articles in *Filmfax* #17. I, too, was a "member" of the Secret Squadron. We persuaded Mom to buy Ovaltine so we could send away for all the goodies. There were two different decoder badges from the TV series. The one you showed on page 68 was gold (plastic); the other was silver (plastic). Both used the same decoding schemes on the back. My brother and I sent in for the plastic Ovaltine shaker several times but they always sent us red mugs. It was just as well to have the mug, for I'm afraid the shaker would have been useless in mixing Ovaltine.

Ovaltine was strange stuff. It was really a chocolate milk additive in the sense that Bosco and Nestle's Quik were. Syrups and powders would mix and dissolve easily in cold milk. A spoonful of Ovaltine would just float on the top, then the crystals would sink to the bottom of the glass. It would not dissolve. Even the commercials had to explain how to use Ovaltine.

I remember Olan Soule as Captain Midnight's science officer Aristotle "Tut" Jones doing commercials showing kids how to make the "Tut special": two spoonfuls of Ovaltine into an empty glass, add hot water to just cover the crystals and stir until dissolved. Then add cold milk. I assume the recent video releases of Ovaltine commercials include Tut's ads.

I imagine by now the Ovaltine folks have ironed out the dissolving problem. I wonder if Ovaltine would have survived at all had it not been for the Captain Midnight tie-in for so many years.

Another note. There was another TV Captain Midnight for at least one season before Richard Webb. The show was called "Captain Midnight" and the sponsor was Ovaltine but the Captain's involvement with the show was only as a host for running old Republic and Monogram serials. The show would open on a filmed shot of a jet fighter speeding through the

Continued on page 10

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sky. Cut to the cockpit and Captain Midnight, complete with the 12 o'clock logo on his helmet. (Must have been a stock shot from the CM serial.)

With breathing mask on (to disguise the face and the voiceover dubbing) the Captain would announce, "This is Captain Midnight. I'll be on the ground in 30 seconds with another exciting adventure. So please stand by!" A minute later there'd be the next installment of *The Mysterious Dr. Satan, Zorro's Fighting Legion, King of the Texas Ranges* or some other serial. The irony is they never showed the *Captain Midnight* serial!

When I tuned in hoping to catch a new serial in the Fall season of 1954, surprise! A real TV series with a jet ("Fire up the Silver Dart, Ikky!"), pocket communicators (S-Q-I calling S-Q-3. Come in, Tut!), goofy sidekick, secret headquarters, fan club, chocolate milk... what more could a kid ask for?

Yet another note: Even when the Webb series was offering mugs and shakers for Ovaltine, the likenesses on them was of that earlier Captain, including the 12 o'clock helmet. (See page 68, *Filmfax* #17.)

—Paul Enchelmayer
South Miami, FL

NOT SO WISE

Robert Wise may claim that any parallels with the story of Jesus were unintentional in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (though to be

definitive on the subject we'd have to have the word of the scriptwriter), but it is not irrelevant to point out that those parallels do exist and are responsible for much of the effectiveness of the movie.

I'm sorry, but you're asking me to swallow a lot when you make a movie about a man who comes down from the heavens, takes the name of "Carpenter," is blindly persecuted and killed, rises from the dead, has one last meeting with his disciples, and ascends into the skies; then tell me Gosh, we never had in mind the single most important mythic figure in Western civilization.

Another thing: The Jesus parallels do not necessarily give *The Day the Earth Stood Still* any extra "meaning." They are not essential to any message it may have. But they are very important to the way the movie works dramatically. Michael Rennie's wonderful performance is not solely responsible for the effectiveness of Klaatu. He would not have nearly so much dramatic weight if he weren't carrying with him our unconscious associations with Jesus. The movie is very stirring on a level few science fiction movies touch, which is not necessarily supported by any profound message. You might say Michael Rennie gets a free ride on Jesus' back.

Without the religious associations, Klaatu would have about as much dramatic impact as the *Phantom From Space* or *The Man*

From Planet X or, let's face it, *Cyborg 2087*.

But hey, don't take my word for it. Steven Spielberg and John Carpenter obviously agree. Which dramatic structure did they choose to copy for *E.T.* and *Starman*?

—Arthur Lundquist
New York, NY

FOR THE RECORD

In your past couple of issues, references have been made to horror film artwork being used in rock album graphics. The generalities of these references are as burning to a music fan as the misspelling of a dinosaur name to your animation historians.

Anyway, and just for the sake of detail, here are the albums mentioned in articles on *Angry Red Planet* and *The Monster of Piedras Blancas*.

The Bat-rat spider-crab from *Angry Red Planet* is shown (along with *Earth vs. The Flying Saucers*) on the cover of the 1982 release of the Misfits' "Walk Among Us" LP, out of print for some time but recently re-released by Ruby Records. Their song titles of "Green Hell," "Astro Zombies," and "Horror Hotel" may also be of interest to *Filmfax* readers, as well as the band's logo, the skull from the *Crimson Ghost* serial.

The group *Angry Red Planet* had a seven-inch single on Chicago's "Touch and Go" label around 1984-85 that used the poster art title lettering. The group did re-

lease a full length LP on another label, but I'm not sure if the original movie type was repeated.

The "heavy metal record album" that the *Monster of Piedras Blancas* appears on is not heavy metal, but the 1982 release from Angry Samoans "Back from Samoa" on the Bad Trip label. The cover photo is a shot of the monster holding the head and is a must see for the great color tint job (or was this a color tinted publicity shot?).

Thanks for not sucking, and I hope you can give us an in-depth feature on Godzilla and Toho studios soon!
—David K. Landis
Champaign, ILL

THE GOODS ON WOOD

The following information and chronology might be of interest to readers of Don Smith's article on *The Phantom Ghoul* (*Filmfax* #18):

Contrary to what has been reported, Wood apparently was still planning to make *Phantom Ghoul* long after Lugosi's hospital discharge; he was still telling this to the Hollywood trade papers, at any rate. In an October 7, 1955 *Hollywood Reporter* blurb, it was announced that *Phantom Ghoul* would commence shooting late that month. The film was to be shot in color and VistaVision (sure, Ed, sure), and would star Lugosi and Bob Steele. Paul Marco was the announced associate producer, Wood the producer, and Harold Daniels (of *Port Sinister/Terror in*

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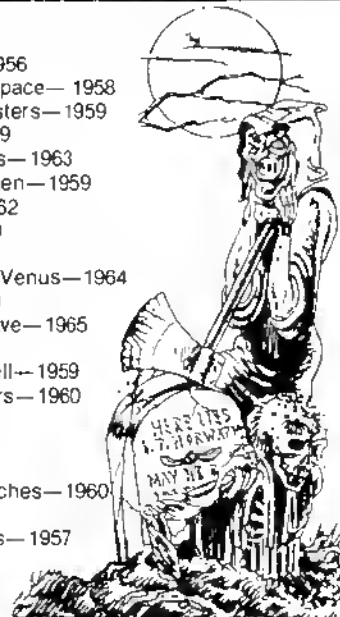
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18. The Brain Eaters—1960
19. The Giant Claw—1957
20. Not of This Earth—1958
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the *Haunted House/House of the Black Death* fame) would direct. (Lugosi's scenes for the film that became *Plan 9 From Outer Space* were shot in November. His final film, *The Black Sleep*, rolled on February 9, 1956.)

—Tom Weaver
No. Tarrytown, NY

HI, HO, CADAVERINO!

I have been enjoying your ongoing city-by-city updates on TV Horror Hosts. Does anyone in the Milwaukee, WI area remember Dr. Cadaverino and Igor from the late '60s and early '70s? They were on very, very late on Friday or Saturday nights on either Channel 6 or 12. The doctor had a heavy beard, fright wig, black top hat, dark sunglasses and smoked a large, cheap cigar. He would read fan mail in a gruff Boris Badenov-ish voice for what seemed like hours and would show the worst Mexican mummy and werewolf movies available. Eventually they moved on to cheap imitation Hercules movies with stars like Rock Stevens. There was always trashy background music like "Surfin' Bird" playing. Meanwhile, Igor, his headless assistant stumbled around the set, performing pathetic sight gags.

Does anybody have further information on the good doctor and Igor?

—Victor Stanley
Lafayette, IN

FIRST CHAN FAN

Regarding the January, *Filmfax*: I especially enjoyed the three articles concerning detective films, but noted that all three contained the same error; namely, that Warner Oland was the first actor to play Charlie Chan. Not so. A reading of Chapter 7 of William K. Everson's excellent *The Detective in Film* (which writer Ken Hanke quotes from, but obviously did not completely read) will prove otherwise. The very first actor to play Chan was George Kuwa, a Japanese, in the lost film *The House Without a Key*, a 10-chapter serial released in 1926. Chan was but a supporting character in it, however. In 1928, *The Chinese Parrot* (also lost) was released, with another Japanese actor, Sojin, in the role of Charlie. The third actor to play the detective was E. L. Park, an Englishman, in the first talkie Chan, *Behind That Curtain*, released in 1929. Two years later came *Charlie Chan Carries On*, the first to feature Oland in the role.

—Philip Leibfried
New York, NY

A HANDY DIRECTOR

I once asked a Columbia set dresser about Sam Katzman. He closed his eyes, chuckled, and related the story of a sound stage wrap party for a youth genre film. Sam was holding a drink in one hand while the other hand rested on the back of a starlet. At a point when this hand had become af-

licted by gravity and arthritis, Mrs. Katzman, a substantial and bespectacled woman, made an appearance. The name "Sam-U-L" was heard to reverberate off the sound stage walls as Jungle Sam dropped what was in both hands!

—Harris Dinerman
Savannah, GA

LOBBYING FOR MORE MOVIE ART

I enjoyed Charles Lee Jackson's "Complete History of Batman" in *Filmfax* #16, and would like to submit a minor correction for the record. Mr. Jackson writes, "The 'next week' card at the end of each chapter was oddly phrased...[for example] Chapter Five, *The Living Corpse of Batman*...Probably not the image they actually wanted to conjure." Mr. Jackson is correct as far as the visuals are concerned, but the soundtrack reads the card more sensibly: "Don't fail to see *The Living Corpse*, Chapter Five of *Batman*..."

I hope your readers will pardon my being a stickler for accuracy, since I have a good reason. In 1966 my neighborhood theater advertised a weekend matinee of "Batman." That's all the ad said. Even as a child, I knew something was wrong—the current Adam West "Batman" feature belonged at the big theaters, not at my second-run haven. There weren't any one-sheets or lobby cards to examine, and when the curtains parted and the Columbia logo appeared ("Columbia?" I thought), I was further intrigued. Of course, I found myself watching the 1943 serial. But here's why I remember those "next week" cards: the careless projectionist screened Chapter Nine... followed by Chapter Fifteen... followed by Chapter Two!

Who knows, maybe they were filmed in that order! Indeed, it does appear that Knox Manning recorded his announcements in random order, and not all at once. I he is heard at the beginning of Chapter Seven, but is absent at the end, where another voice fills in.

This reader is also impressed by the excellent graphics in your magazine. Please keep the reproductions of pressbooks, posters, and lobby cards coming. They're every bit as fascinating as the articles they illustrate.

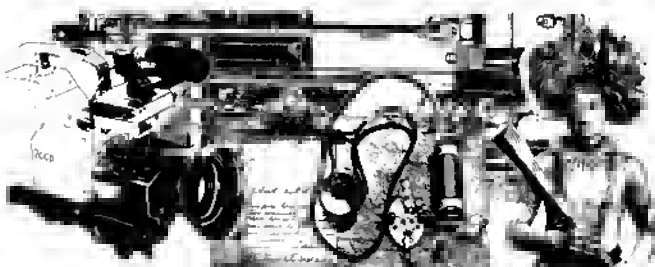
—Scott MacGillivray
Ipswich, MA

SUB-VERSIVE TACTICS

I finally decided to subscribe to *Filmfax* because it is such a battle trying to find the magazine around Hyde Park—it just disappears from the stands before the bundle is even undone. (Never mind the self-styled intellectuals of the University of Chicago and their crummy sneer tactics—what do they know. The sneaks, I see them hunched over, reading the magazine on the sly.)

—Joan Hives
Chicago, IL

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14302 The Brain That Wouldn't Die

A young surgeon has discovered he can keep alive the head of his fiancée, who was tragically decapitated. With the brain of his lover intact, he goes on a search to find "the perfect body" for her in this 1963 thriller. Bizarre entertainment starring Herb (Jason) Evers and Virginia Leith. B&W 83 minutes

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14282 Ride in the Whirlwind

A different kind of Western, written by and starring Jack Nicholson in 1966. Also features Cameron Mitchell and Harry Dean Stanton. Color 83 minutes

13183 The Trial

Orson Welles directs Anthony Perkins in this 1963 adaptation of the Kafka novel. B/W 113 minutes

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BATMANIA by James Van Hise, Pioneer Books, trade paperback, 154 pages, \$14.95.

Given the enormous success of *Batman*, 1989's summer box-office smash, a resurgence of interest in the 1966-68 *Batman* television series was inevitable. The show is once again widely offered in syndication, and star Adam West has been seen on the personal-appearance circuit. Inevitable, too, was a book about the show. James Van Hise's *Batmania* is that book, and it turns out to be a mixed blessing: enthusiastically written but with perhaps more of the fanzine feel than might be appropriate for a \$14.95 trade paperback; seemingly accurate within its self-imposed limits; unfortunately undercut by terrible design and production values.

Given Van Hise's background as a long-time comic-book fan and fanzine writer, the faintly fanatic tone of this book is not surprising. He's enamored of his subject, and it shows. If he often interjects too much of himself into the text, that's okay. This is, after all, just a history of a television show, not a scholarly treatise on the Hundred Years' War. In this context, a little gosh-wow subjectivity is fine.

Following a generally useful but too-brief sketch of Batman's comic-book career (in which preeminent Batman artist Dick Sprang is mentioned only in passing and key editors Jack Schiff and Julius



Schwartz not at all), the book moves into exhaustive synopses of the *Batman* serials, *Batman* (1943) and *Batman and Robin* (1949). Emphasis here is on plot elements, complemented by brief notes about the players. Van Hise's chapter-by-chapter synopses are unnecessarily detailed, but he deserves a few points for attempting to place the serials in the context of their day, particularly with regard to the first one's virulent anti-Japanese sentiments. Very little background or "making of" information is given for either serial.

The greater part of the book is given

over to aspects of the *Batman* TV show, discussed by Van Hise and contributing writer Ron Magid. Separate chapters offer good career summaries for Adam West and co-stars Burt Ward and Yvonne Craig; the Craig piece, which includes the actress's frank comments about the show's occasionally frenzied shoots, is especially enjoyable. Other articles/interviews focus on actress Julie Newmar (Catwoman), scripter Stanley Ralph Ross, and Batmobile-builder George Barris. William J. Felchner provides a brief overview of TV-Batman collectibles, and Jeff & Bob Marks take a fanatically detailed look at the *Batman* gum cards of the 1960s.

All of this makes for an innocuous read, but lax copy-editing is a constant annoyance; much of the text is written so conversationally as to be unprofessional. There are syntactic gaffes, too. Our favorite is this preface to a remark by Burt Ward about the TV show's on-set hazards: "Ward continued his litany of complaints about the risks he was forced to take in his *Starlog* interview." Despite this sort of amateurish lapse, *Batmania's* chatty editorial content is generally pleasant enough to satisfy undemanding *Batman* fans, and readers unfamiliar with the character or television series. What sinks the book is its design, prominently credited (as is the editing) to Hal Schuster.

Continued on page 14

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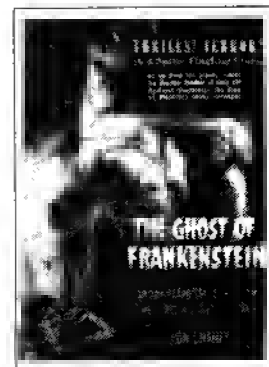
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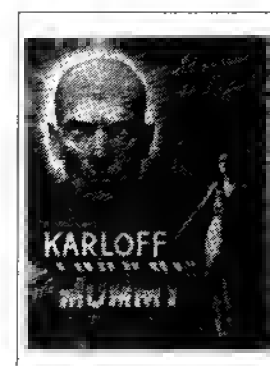
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The Rogue Song - Complete story and script from Laurel & Hardy's only lost film. Includes color frame blowups and wonderful never-before-seen stills from Stan Laurel's personal scrapbook.
All Quiet on the Western Front, This Island Earth, Buck Privates, Sherlock Holmes and many more!

Page design is often crowded, usually unappealing. Because type faces and specs inexplicably change from one chapter to another, the book has no visual continuity. A number of photos intrude so dramatically into columns of type that these columns are absurdly narrow, and rife with hyphens where words had to be broken. Decks (large-type callouts of portions of the main text) are poorly placed and often badly designed. Nicely reproduced color photos adorn the book's front and back covers, but all interior shots (dozens of them uncaptioned, an editorial no-no) are in washed-out black-and-white.

The *Batman* series was no undying masterpiece, but it had energy and an impudence of style that deserves better treatment than it receives in *Batmania*.

—David J. Hogan

REMEMBERING CHARLIE by Jerry Epstein, Doubleday, Hardbound, 228 pages, \$30.00

Among the recent publications marking Charlie Chaplin's centennial, perhaps the most informative is Jerry Epstein's *Remembering Charlie*, an intimate pictorial biography on the film comedian's later years.

A producer and screenwriter, Epstein worked with Chaplin on his last movies, *Limelight* (1952), *A King in New York* (1957) and *A Countess From Hong Kong* (1967). Epstein first met Chaplin through

his association with Los Angeles' Circle Theater during the late 1940s and would remain one of Charlie's closest friends.

Epstein's engaging, though subjective text (Chaplin's final cinematic contributions were hardly the classics Epstein claims them to be—especially the dreary *A Countess From Hong Kong*, a sad swansong if ever there was one) accompanies over 300 photographs shot largely of Chaplin and his family when they resided in Vevey, Switzerland after his 1952 self-exile from America. The photos capture many personal and private sides of Chaplin previously unseen.

The book provides revealing, first-hand insights of Chaplin at work on his films: teaming up with a presumably down-and-out Buster Keaton for a comic sketch in *Limelight*; directing an unhappy Marlon Brando in *Countess* ("This is the easiest picture I've ever made. I don't have to do anything. Charlie's doing it all!"); and preparing for his final, unrealized project *The Freak*, described by Epstein as "a combination of *E.T.* and *The Elephant Man*." Epstein also documents the restrictive working conditions on *A King in New York* and *Countess* (both made in London), which perhaps explains why they are Chaplin's weakest efforts.

Despite the occasional self-indulgence of Epstein's writing, *Remembering Charlie* is a valuable entry for Chaplin aficionados and a memorable portrait of a pioneering cinema artist.

—Scott Rivers

HOT TODDY by Andy Edmonds. Morrow, 304 pgs, photographs, \$18.95.

Popular and vivacious, she was the "Ice Cream Blonde," Hollywood's own "Hot Toddy." The impact of her on-screen sparkle was surpassed only by the shocking circumstances of her death. Actress Thelma Todd is one of Hollywood's great "stories." Like Fatty Arbuckle, like Peg Entwistle, like William Desmond Taylor, Todd has come to be remembered not for her career, but as a symbol of the dark side of early Hollywood.

Thelma Todd was a hugely popular comedienne, a competent dramatic actress, and perhaps the most beautiful woman in movies. She was just 30 years old in 1935, when she died of carbon monoxide poisoning in her Pacific Palisades garage, slumped behind the steering wheel of her Lincoln Phaeton convertible. Not just a movie star but the co-owner of a popular Hollywood-area restaurant, Todd was highly visible and well-liked. Her death sent a shock wave through Hollywood and, indeed, across the nation. How could such a tragedy have happened?

As convincingly demonstrated by Andy Edmonds in her book, *Hot Toddy*, the inquest that should have answered that question was confused and undercut by the fear and ulterior motives of many of the participants. The official ruling—accidental death—satisfied few people at the time, and has remained a source of speculation for more than 50 years. Edmonds's

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contention that the truth was covered up seems likely. The author's subsequent assertions—including a purported solution to the mystery of Todd's death—are provocative but less convincing. Even at the very least, *Hot Toddy* is a welcome chronicle of an actress whose career has been unjustly neglected by film historians.

Thelma Todd was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts in 1905. She planned on becoming a schoolteacher, but her win in the 1925 Miss Massachusetts beauty contest caught the attention of a movie scout, who arranged for Thelma to travel to the Paramount/Famous Players-Lasky Studios in Astoria, Long Island. Todd's first film, *Fascinating Youth*, was released in 1926. Later, she moved to Los Angeles with the rest of the New York filmmaking community. By 1929, after appearing in nearly 20 features, Thelma was signed by Hal Roach, who gave her featured roles in two-reel comedies starring Laurel & Hardy and Charley Chase. Thelma's beauty, natural comic timing, and willingness to do anything for a laugh endeared her to audiences. Roach was quick to realize Todd's moneymaking potential, and set out to create a female Laurel & Hardy team. He paired Thelma with ZaSu Pitts, an eccentric, big-eyed actress who had started her career in heavily dramatic parts (e.g. Von Stroheim's *Greed*) but who later gravitated toward scatterbrained comedy. The Todd/Pitts two-reelers began production in 1931 and were tremendously successful. When Pitts left Roach in 1933,

Todd was paired with bombastic comic actress Patsy Kelly; the shorts continued to be immensely popular and were still in production at the time of Thelma's death.

Throughout her career as a star of two-reel comedies, Todd took starring and supporting roles in a variety of comic and dramatic features. Her fervent wish was to become a legitimate leading lady—something more than "just" a star of two-reelers. Director Roland West—one of many men with whom Todd was linked romantically, and for years a prime suspect in her death—was awed by Thelma's beauty, and worked hard on her behalf. He made a big push to get a dramatic feature called *Corsair* off the ground, but Hal Roach refused to allow Thelma to do the picture. She did it anyway, but billed herself as "Alison Lloyd." Unfortunately, *Corsair* (1931) bombed. West's career as a director was over, but not his relationship with Thelma. Together they owned Thelma Todd's Sidewalk Cafe, located on Roosevelt Highway (now Pacific Coast Highway) in Pacific Palisades, near Malibu. Above the restaurant were adjoining apartments maintained by Todd and West. Above that, the house owned by West's wife, actress Jewel Carmen.

West was inordinately jealous of Thelma's career and private life, and continued to carry a torch for her after her 1932 marriage to Pat DiCicco, a handsome show-biz agent with close ties to organized crime. One of DiCicco's associates was Lucky Luciano, a coldly brutal New

York mobster who wanted to extend his influence into Hollywood and the movie community. As Thelma was drawn deeper into DiCicco's world, Roland West's fear and jealousy grew. *Hot Toddy* claims that Luciano pressured West and Thelma to allow him to turn the restaurant's unused third floor into an illegal gambling club. The book claims many other dark things, as well, among them that Luciano became Todd's brutal lover and that he encouraged and heightened her dependence on amphetamines.

Edmonds researched her book for seven years. She interviewed dozens of people, examined reams of official documents and personal correspondence, traveled to key locations in Todd's life. She paints a vivid picture of Todd's predicament, and the helplessness of those who really cared for her. Nothing claimed by the author seems unreasonable, but the narrative lacks the air of true scholarship that might have made it completely convincing. For instance, the book is filled with recreated dialogue that cannot be based on anything but speculation. Many of the author's insights into the motivation of key players seem similarly speculative. Most nagging is that many of the details of Todd's final hours come from a man who, according to Edmonds, was still alive in 1987, still influential in Hollywood, and who must remain anonymous—and thus unverifiable.

Because *Hot Toddy* is aimed at a broad readership that has, at best, only a small

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familiarity with Thelma Todd, the book emphasizes the "juicy" parts of Todd's personal life; the particulars of Thelma's film career are merely sketched in. Many readers will wish for more information about Todd's personal and professional relationships with Laurel & Hardy, Charley Chase (an unsung genius of American film comedy), the Marx Brothers, partners Pitts and Kelly, and others. The book includes a useful filmography but almost no critical analysis of Todd's work. (The best look at Todd's two-reelers remains Leonard Maltin's loving and thorough chapter in his excellent 1972 book, *The Great Movie Shorts*.)

The quality of Thelma's two-reelers is variable, in part because the on-screen personas of Todd, Pitts, and Kelly are never as consistent or as clearly defined as those of Chase or Laurel & Hardy. Still, the shorts are always interesting, frequently delightful. A few are available on video and others sometimes turn up on cable TV. Edmonds's closing remarks echo the feelings of most everyone who has seen the Ice Cream Blonde on film: "Perhaps Thelma Todd will once more be appreciated for her beauty and wonderful comedic skills, rather than remembered for her tragic death." —David J. Hogan

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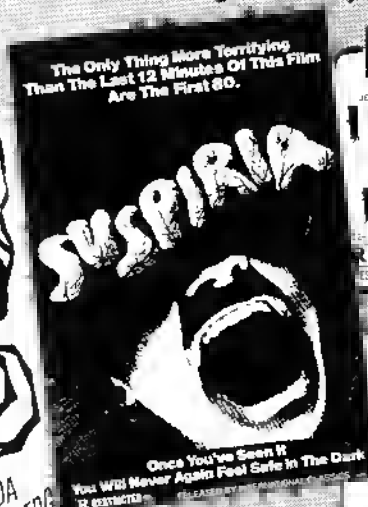
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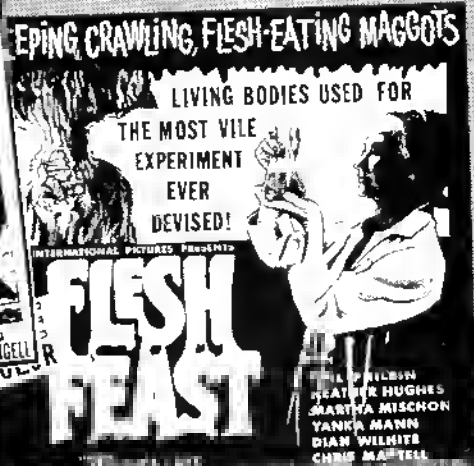
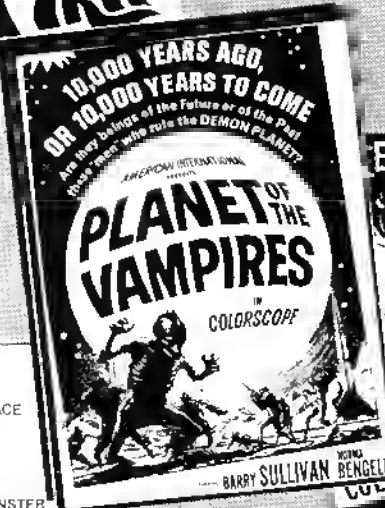
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Continued on page 22



CAPTAIN VIDEO (60 min.) Very rare "live" episodes of the '50s space opera hailed as the first sci-fi show on TV.

CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT (Starring Richard Webb) (Two 30 min. episodes per volume. Approx. 60 min. total)
Volume 1: Deadly Diamonds/The Frozen Man
Volume 2: Mission to Mexico/Million Dollar Diamond
Volume 3: The Secret Room/Artic Avalanche

SPACE PATROL & FLASH GORDON (Revised Edition/60 min.) Buzz, Happy, Flash and Dale in a dynamic double feature of early science fiction TV adventures. Ed Kemmer and Lyn Osborn patrolled the space lanes regularly in their highly popular "live TV" show. Steve Holland, however, did not fare so well as Flash in this seriously silly 1951 DuMont Network sci-fi costume drama.

ROCKY JONES, SPACERANGER COLLECTION (This collection features five individual volumes. Running times differ. NOTE: 90 min. tapes are \$29.95 ea.)

Volume 1: Beyond the Moon (Feature Version/90 min.)
Volume 2: Rocky's Odyssey (Chapters 1-3 / 90 min.)
Volume 3: Escape Into Space & Private War (Two complete 1/2 hour shows / 60 min.)
Volume 4: Silver Needle in the Sky (Chapters 1-3 / 90 min.)
Volume 5: Forbidden Moon (Feature Version/90 min.)

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TERRY AND THE PIRATES & STEVE CANYON (approx. 60 min.) Two of Milton Caniff's greatest cartoon strip characters appeared on TV briefly in the 1950s. Featuring the first pilot episode of *Terry and the Pirates* and also a Steve Canyon episode starring Dean Fredericks.

THE HOWDY DOODY CIRCUS & HOWDY DOODY FOR PRESIDENT (60 min.) Two classic slices of Eisenhower Era kid-vid with Howdy, Buffalo Bob, Clarabell, Mr. Bluster, Ditty Daffy and all the other Doodyville regulars.

ROOTIE KAZOOTIE & HOWDY DOODY FOR PRESIDENT (60 min.) Two early '50s kid-vids: Kazootie! Rootie (a baseball-capped puppet), his girl-friend Polka Dottie, and arch enemy Poison Zumack star in the first, while Howdy & Co. act out the puppetry of politics.

ROOTIE KAZOOTIE & THE ADVENTURES OF BLINKY (45 min.) Two 15 min. Rootie Kazootie shows and one more of Blinky, another classic puppet program. Quality is fair, but historically, both shows are priceless.

ANDY'S GANG: VOL 1-5 (Five different 60 min. volumes, featuring two 30 min. shows on each) When Smilin' Ed McConnell died, Andy Devine took over the Buster Brown Gang show, along with regulars Squeaky, Midnight and Froggy. Featuring episodes of "Gunga Ram, the East India Boy." (Indicate specific volume desired.)



KUKLA, FRAN & OLLIE (60 min.) Burr Tillstrom and Fran Allison revolutionized kid-TV with these personality-packed puppets, featuring a bald-headed clown, a buck-toothed dragon, Buteah the Witch and Madame Oglepuss.

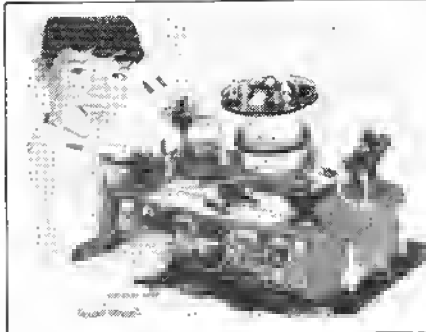
TIME FOR BEANY (30 min.) Two episodes of Bob Clampett's acclaimed puppet show starring the propeller-topped boy, Beany, and Cecil, the seasick dragon, with voices provided by Stan Freberg and Jerry Colonna.

WINKY DINK AND YOU & SUPER CIRCUS (60 min.) Get out your Winky Dink Screen (clear plastic sheet placed over the TV screen) and join host Jack Barry in this animated viewer-participation classic. Then ringmaster Claude Kirchner and baton-twirling heartthrob Mary Hartline host a circus of slapstick skits, clowns and specialties.

THE GUMBY SHOW (with Pinky Lee) & SMILIN' ED'S GANG (60 min.) Early animated adventures of that "little green clayboy" hosted by comic Pinky Lee. Also, meet Squeaky the Mouse, Midnight the Cat and Froggy the Gremlin on the famous Smilin' Ed McConnell show.

PAUL WINCHELL SHOW & FOODINI THE GREAT (60 min.) Two wooden-head wondershows: Jerry Mahoney and Knucklehead Smith star as ventriloquist Paul Winchell's wise-cracking dummies. Foodini was a sleight-of-hand puppet who performed live magic skits for kids.

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VOL. 2: Space Patrol for Kellogg's Cereals, Captain Gallant (Buster Crabbe & son Cuffy) for Heinz Foods, Motorrific Car Set, Mickey Mouse Candy Factory, Fizzies, plus the complete line of Suzie Homemaker products "for the girls," plus dozens more mind-bending toy commercials.

VOL. 3: A tour inside the Ideal Toy Factory showing the making of "Robert the Robot," Flintstones for Kent Cigarettes, Ding Dong School's Miss Francis live for Wheaties, Milton Bradley Games Series, & dozens more. Also includes a rare short film: "The Future of Toys" circa 1959.

VOL. 4: Johnny Seven Super Helmet plus 7-in-One Gun (the one-man army), Soupy Sales for Gino's Pizza, Dick Van Dyke for Bosco, Ideal Toy Co. promo film for newest models, Roy Rogers in South America giving away Ideal Toys to underprivileged children, plus dozens more spots.

VOL. 5: Bucky Beaver Space Man for Ipana Toothpaste, Scotch Tape with Flying Saucer premium, Sid Melton as a G.I. for Mattel Fire Bolt Guns, Rottie Kazootie for Silvercup Bread, Ideal Toy promo for Christmas of 1959. Kids dream of owning a Chevy & having a license, plus more.

VOL. 6: Space Patrol Binoculars, Howdy Doody for Tootsie Rolls, Billy Mummy for Tommy Burst Machine Gun, Casper talking doll, GI Joe Sinking Space Capsule, USS Skipjack, Invisible Boy spot, Erector Sets, Lionel Trains, Kellogg's Superman Belt & Flying Toy giveaways, more.

CLASSIC CAR COMMERCIALS: VOL. 1 (Approx. 60 min.) A wonderfully long spot for the 1960 Thunderbird (and the '61 Ford is a dream). The 1959 Chevrolet with Pat Boone and Dinah Shore. Task Force '57, the long and detailed line of Chevy trucks. A Detroit factory making a Dodge. Commercials showcasing The National Auto Show at Detroit's Cobo Hall in 1961. Esso Gasoline, Atlas and Goodyear Tires, Prestone Anti-Freeze and lots more.

CLASSIC CAR COMMERCIALS Vol. 2 (Approx. 60 min.) More footage on those unforgettable autos from the 1950s & '60s. Also including Rex Marshall for Esso Oil Company, Chevy 1955, Drive Safely spots, GM parts animated by Disney artist John Hubley, Delco Batteries around the world, the Wildcat, Corvair and much more.

THE LUSTRE CREME MOVIE STAR COLLECTION: VOL. 1 (Approx. 60 min.) Lustre Creme signed many starlets as well as seasoned professionals to do segments on their Lustre Creme TV campaign. Definitely a glamorous trip down nostalgia lane with the famous and the not-so-famous: Jane Russell, Ester Williams, Anita Ekberg, Elizabeth Taylor, Barbara Stanwick, Joan Bennett, Jane Powell, Ann Blyth, Ann Sheridan, Martha Hyer, Barbara Rush, Rhonda Fleming, Yvonne DeCarlo and dozens of other shampoo-selling beauty queen contribute their star-studded suds to this unique video sampler.

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CLASSIC CIGARETTE COMMERCIALS: VOL. 1

(Approx. 60 min.) Now illegal, commercials for cigarettes on television have become an extinct media art form. Gone are the days of 30 second spots for dancing Old Gold cigarettes, Marlboro Men, Kents with the Dick van Dyke Show, Dutch Masters with Ernie Kovacks and Edie Adams, Lucky Strikes, Salem, Kools, Winston's, Benson & Hedges, and a host of others. Rewind and take a puff...

CLASSIC TV COMMERCIALS OF THE FIFTIES & SIXTIES: VOLUMES 1-18 (approx. 60 min. ea.)

Absolute proof that America is a nation of consumers—We are what we buy, and boy, did we buy! From candy bars to cigarettes to cars...we were the most consumer-conscious country in the world. There are too many products jam-packed into each 60 minute volume to list them all individually. But take our word for it—you'll love reliving those bygone days of low-priced products and 60 second propaganda. We suggest you start with VOL. 1, then continue on if you get hooked. Remember...BUY! BUY! BUY!

THE CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT COMMERCIALS: 1954-1957 (Approx. 60 min.) A whole tape full of classic Ovaltine (and some Kix) commercials delivered by the Captain (Richard Webb) himself, including give-aways of Hot & Cold Shakeups, Secret Squadron Membership Premiums, a perennial parade of rare Decoder Badges, Flight Patches, and more. And as an added surprise, the "original" Captain Midnight (in a different costume) makes an early appearance. Also included is a montage of episode preview clips. Definitely a collector's dream video.

THE SUPERMAN ARCHIVES COLLECTOR'S EDITION: VOL. 3 (Approx. 60 min.) George Reeves improvises some Kellogg's commercials at home. Legendary Superman tv producer Whitney Ellsworth conducts off-camera interviews on this rarely seen, uncut video. Superboy Screen Test with Johnny Rockwell as Superboy doing scenes with hopefuls for the part of Lana Lang. Plus a great print of "Stamp Day For Superman," a classic Treasury Department short with the Daily Planet gang and kidnapped Lois needing Superman's help.

THE LIONEL TRAIN COLLECTION: VOL. 1 (Approx. 60 min./Revised edition) An expanded collection of train commercials and tv shows with a special addition of a rare TV show, The Wonderful World of Trains. Plus: The Iron Pony, how trains are made. Also a visit with Joe DiMaggio in the Lionel Club House. Great '60s footage.

THE A.C. GILBERT COMPANY AND AMERICAN FLYER TRAINS (Approx 55 min.) The A.C. Gilbert Company is best known for their Erector Set series. Through this special sales film, the collection is shown, as well as the company's telescopes, chemistry sets, road racing sets, and Erector radio kits. Also included is another uncut episode of the Boy's Railroad Club, plus two great train-related cartoons from 35mm masters.

THE BOY'S RAILROAD CLUB (Approx 55 min.) This classic kid's program was sponsored by the legendary toy company, A. C. Gilbert, and was designed to show off their line of American Flyer Trains in the 1950s. Guests from well-known train lines would discuss the real world of railroading and watch the kids play with their American Flyers. Contains classic clips of real and model trains.

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rare machine that a woman can admire and enjoy to the fullest, but that only a man can really understand."

Real men also know that Chevy enjoyed remarkable success with its models for 1955-57. Both volumes of this collection include a number of spots for the '55 Chevy, brainchild of engineer Ed Cole and stylist Harley Earl. It was a ground-breaking car that Chevy knew would practically sell itself: In one spot, a helpful Chevy salesman asks the customer, "Like some factual information now?" Declares the happy buyer, "No thanks!"

You're sure to notice that most of these commercials are woefully short on hard information. Mainly, the copywriters dished out meaningless generalizations, pseudo-scientific gobbledegook, sappy platitudes, and bogus promises of glamour for the middle classes. Naturally, we ate it up.

Music and lots of it helps to sell this array of glittering Detroit iron. Not the thumping rock beat that batters us today, but up-tempo jazz, smart stuff with piccolos, and lots of male chorales, too. In a spot for Dodge, a chorus of lusty Paul Robeson understudies manfully sings, "I took my two hands and built an automobile!" We note the small army of spot-welders busily doing jobs that were later taken away by robots. But we won't think about that now. It's still the fifties, and no one has a

better, more secure job than a UAW man.

In the world of car commercials, lifetime job security isn't the only thing that's possible. People float from the sky straight into the driver's seats of their Hertz rental cars. Buster Keaton does a pratfall for Ford Econoline vans. At the neighborhood Hess station, spotlessly clean attendants in white uniforms and bow ties trot out to service the family car. A pretty girl wearing a formal gown changes her date's Purolator oil filter in Lover's Lane, and mousy Arnold Stang is treated like a real mensch when he declares his intention to buy a new Delco battery. Super Shell has Platformate, talking fishshill for Esso Extra gasoline, and you can still pick up a brand new Goodyear tire for \$12.88. It's all a fond, short-lived dream. The road ahead? Straight and clear for miles, of course.

—David J. Hogan

TRAILERS ON TAPE: 1939 COLLECTION
S. F. Rush Video, 60 minutes. (See ad on page 22.)

What is the all-time best "movie year?" Poll any reasonably knowledgeable film buff and the answer you'll hear four times out of five is "1939." In a year that was summed up by the sunny optimism of the New York World's Fair and the horrors of the opening shots of World War II, Hollywood put its amazing factory apparatus in motion to create a slew of pictures that have become enduring classics. S. F. Rush Video's *Trailers on*

Tape: 1939 Collection is an eclectic compilation of trailers from more than 20 Hollywood films released in 1939. This number includes many of the expected heavyweights—*The Wizard of Oz*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Gunga Din*—and also a number of lesser, but no less interesting, 1939 releases. Unfocused except by year of release, the collection (including some rerelease trailers) is nonetheless entertaining and of interest to every movie lover.

Trailer fans who are accustomed to the unrelenting camp and hysteria of previews for horror and sf films, particularly those from the 1950s, may be surprised by the variance in tone adopted by these earlier ads for "mainstream" pictures. The self-important trailer for *Goodbye Mr. Chips*, for example, is hosted by a somnabulistic Alexander Woolcott, and seems to go on forever. But most of the reels are in the grand trailer style, with plenty of vivid closeup scenes, breathless voice-over, and hyperbolic ad copy that sweeps across the screen like a runaway locomotive. Ingrid Bergman is described in the trailer for *Intermezzo* as "A woman in the full splendor of unchecked devotion!" Forceful Ida Lupino, cast as a disagreeable little Cockney in *The Light That Failed*, promises to live up to her description as "A girl of the streets with the devil in her soul." And the memorable Bette Davis film, *Dark Victory*, is described as "The portrait of a free soul."

Clearly, there were good roles for wom-

Continued on page 24

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- SEE!** Millions flee their homes in terror — sickened by the sights on their TVs — as they search for a source for this new phenomenon . . . (See Below)



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en in 1939, and the ultimate "woman's" movie may be—what else?—*The Women*, a tart comedy of manners with an incredibly potent cast: Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer, Rosalind Russell, Joan Fontaine, Paulette Goddard, Ruth Hussey, and Mary Boland. The film's trailer gives at least a glimpse of everyone in the cast, and invites audiences to "see [the women] with their hair down—and their claws out!"

For manly thrills, audiences are invited to enjoy James Cagney and George Raft—"Firebrands of the Screen"—in *Each Dawn I Die*, a serviceable prison thriller. Humphrey Bogart threatens at least a dozen people in the trailer for the seldom-seen *King of the Underworld*, and (temporarily) teams up with Cagney in Raoul Walsh's unforgettable *The Roaring Twenties*, a drama so vivid that its signature song, "I'm Just Wild About Harry," actually sounds good.

Other trailers in the collection focus more on the story or situation than on the stars. The sweeping railroad adventure *Union Pacific*, for instance, is characterized as a chronicle of "roaring, reckless days," and to prove it, the trailer includes a glimpse of the picture's spectacular train-wreck sequence. *Idiot's Delight*, that curious last gasp of pre-war Hollywood pacifism, is heralded as "The Mightiest Blast of Dramatic Dynamite A Man Ever Dared Write!" Well, maybe so, but modern audiences seem to enjoy the picture most for the

unlikely spectacle of rough-hewn Clark Gable singing and hoofing to "Puttin' on the Ritz."

Those of us who prefer simpler entertainment will enjoy the video's inclusion of trailers for Max and Dave Fleischer's *Gulliver's Travels*, the Fleisher Studios' ambitious bid to usurp Disney as Hollywood's premier creator of full-length cartoons. Little wonder that *Gulliver*, with its lush color and fanciful supporting characters, was a commercial hit. A cute trailer for *Beware, Spooks!* pits the mouth that roared, Joe E. Brown, against perennial heavy Marc Lawrence, as Joe investigates a mystery at a Coney Island fun house.

Out-and-out horror is represented by the trailer for *The Human Monster*, perhaps the most underrated of Bela Lugosi's B-thrillers. Based on a story by Edgar Wallace, this British production concerns the unscrupulous activities of an insurance man who victimizes the residents of a home for the blind. Grim stuff, but offset on this video by the trailer for *At The Circus*, starring the Marx Brothers, "Plus Thousands of Wild Animals, Actors, and People." It's a "Ponderous Panorama of Beauty and Spectacle," and a "Mighty Miracle of Musical Magnificence." Quick, check that copywriter for steroids.

Other notable releases represented on 1939 Collection include *Another Thin Man*, *Juarez*, *Only Angels Have Wings*, and *Wuthering Heights*. Wonderful stuff, but just a sample of 1939's memorable releases. Our suggestion to S. F. Rush Video:

go to the vaults a second time and give us "1939 Collection Part II."

—David J. Hogan


MINUTE MOVIE MASTERPIECES Rhino-Video, 30 min. (See ad in Filmfax #18)

If you need to study for that big graduate film-school exam but have no time in which to do it, your pals at Rhino Video have come to the rescue with *Minute Movie Masterpieces*, a kind of video Cliff's Notes that encapsulates 30 movies and squeezes them into 30 minutes. For a movie buff, it's the equivalent of one of those six-day bus tours of Europe, where the driver yells "Eiffel Tower!" and if you poke your head from the window of the speeding bus a second too late you've missed it. But if you're quick enough, you'll be able to brag to the folks back home, "I saw the Eiffel Tower."

Likewise, after devoting a paltry half-hour to *Minute Movie Masterpieces*, you can say that you've seen *The Lady Vanishes*, *D.O.A.*, *A Farewell to Arms*, *The General*, *The Birth of a Nation*, even *God's Little Acre*. Ba-boom, you're a film historian.

Okay, this is just another wacky Rhinotype idea, a party tape designed to give your guests something to focus on while their bloodstreams struggle to assimilate the alcohol. It's a slight idea but, drunk or sober, you'll probably find it pretty amusing. Writer/director/co-narrator David Starns has done a splendid job of picking

Continued on page 26



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SUPERBOY-'Lost' 1961 Live Action Pilot! (1961): From the makers of 'Adventures of Superman' Comes this rare pilot! 30min/B&W \$15.00

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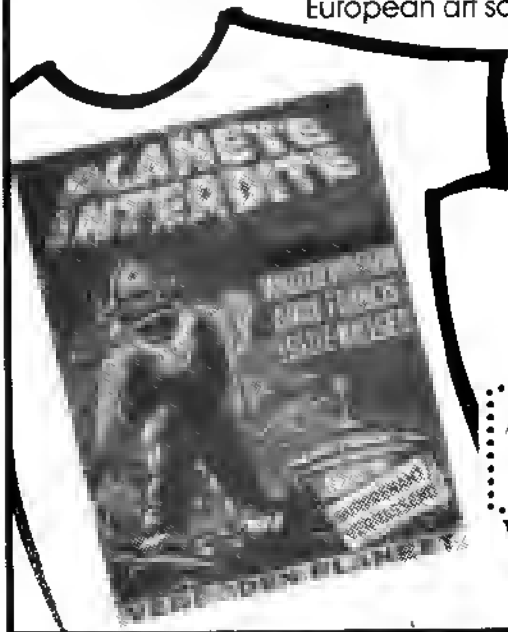
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Three years in the making, this award-winning film comprehensively details Pal's life and work, from the early Tupperware chart subjects to Rod Taylor's journey in THE TIME MACHINE and Gene Barry's battle against the night-march invasion from Mars in THE WAR OF THE WORLDS. Includes scenes from DESTINATION HOPKIN, WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE, GOLIATH, CONQUEST OF SPACE, TONIGHT, 1961 WONDERFUL WORLD OF THE BRITISH AS GRABBY 21 ACES OF DR. 140, ATLANTIS THE LOST CONTINENT, and other classics from the Pal Library, with rare, never-released footage and more! Includes rings!

Included are 11 short films with George Pal himself and Shirley Bonestell, the famed astronomical artist of WAR OF THE WORLDS. Guests include Joe Dante, Ray Bradbury, Gene Roddenberry, Ray Harryhausen, Charlton Heston, Rod Taylor, Tony Curtis, Janet Leigh, Tom Rundell, Alvin Young, Rini Timblin, Robert Wise, Robert Bloch, Walter Lantz, Roy E. Disney, Sacha Gervais, Ann Robinson, Wally Chung, Gene Warren Sr., Albert Sznajder, and more. Narrated by Paul Tricer.

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out key scenes from each film, putting them together at a pace just slower than a blur, and adding accurate, often hilarious voice-over narration.

In particular, it is Starn's high-speed voice—alternately piping and over-emphatic—that turns this tape into a good time. And as a writer, Starns proves himself a master of the sort of understatement that cheerfully trivializes the most sober themes and situations. A key element of D.W. Griffith's weighty silent epic *Intolerance*, for example, is summed up thusly: "In France, Catholics and Protestants battle it out!" At the end, "Griffith imagines a world in which war is no more, and little kids have lots of fun!"

The Chaney version of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* is described as being set "in 15th century Paris, an interesting place to be if you like a good party or if you're really ugly!" Later, after the wretched Quasimodo has been tied to the wheel and publicly flogged, "Esmeralda makes his day by giving him a beverage!"

If Starns isn't afraid to make light of a little torture, he isn't going to be fazed by death, either. Fredric March's watery suicide at the conclusion of *A Star Is Born* is cheerfully described as "a long walk on a short beach!" Frank Capra's rumination on suicide, *It's A Wonderful Life*, is summed up as the story of a guy who becomes "a little depressed."

You get the idea. *Minute Movie Masterpieces* is snappy, sassy fun. And at 30 minutes, it doesn't overstay its welcome. Starns and co-narrator Judith Silinsky keep the commentary brief and funny, and your attention isn't likely to wander before one mini-movie ends and the next one begins.

This reviewer's only gripe is that not once in the video's otherwise clever summation of the original *The Little Shop of Horrors* is it mentioned that wonder-weed Audrey Jr. can talk! But Starns redeems himself by helpfully noting that the title character of *Cyrano De Bergerac* is "a French captain of the guard with a really big nose!" Pauline Kael couldn't have said it more incisively.

—David J. Hogan

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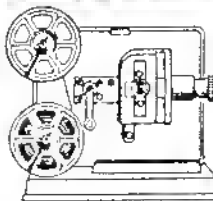
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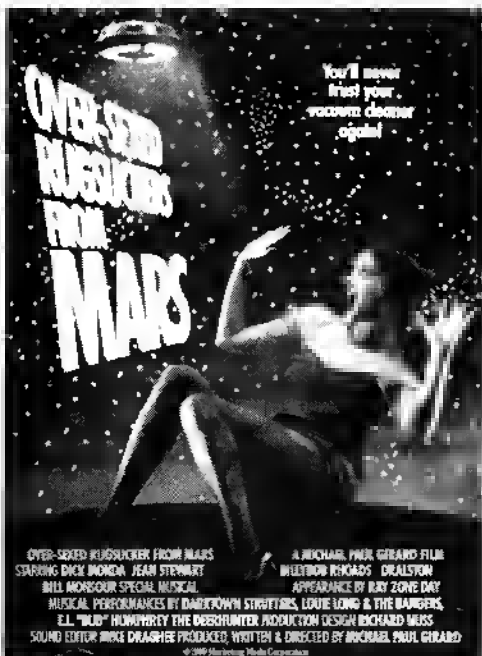
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DICK TRACY IN B FLAT or FOR GOODNESS SALES, ISN'T HE EVER GOING TO MARRY TESS TRUEHEART? Sandy Hook Records, Release No. 52 SH 2052, An "Armed Forces Radio Services Command Performance," Feb. 15, 1945. Price: \$6.45 (See Filmfax Products ad on page 29)

Cast of Characters: Bing Crosby as Dick Tracy; Bob Hope as Flat Top; Frank Sinatra as Shakey; Dinah Shore as Tess Trueheart; Jimmy Durante as The Mole; Cass Daley as Gravel Gertie; The Andrews Sisters as The Summer Sisters; Judy Garland as Snowflake; Frank Morgan as Vitamin Flintheart; Harry Von Zell as Old Judge Hooper and the Announcer; Jerry Colonna as the Police Chief.

Tess Trueheart thinks she's been stood up at the altar once too often. From her point of view, thirteen years of waiting for ace detective Dick Tracy is enough, so she announces that "(her) heart will remain true, but the rest of (her) may stray a little!"

In a recent TV interview on *The Sally Jessy Raphael Show*, Maxine Andrews of the Andrews Sisters, who plays one of the Summer Sisters, remarked, "Everyone was in love with each other during World War II. There was a feeling of mutual respect and admiration and total co-operation. But we were in the war to end all wars and the boys who went to fight it were very young. Unfortunately, many of them never returned. Despite that, they were the happiest of times."



Photo by Randy Meyers

That sentiment shines through this vintage vinyl treasure. These performers are literally in love with the idea of working together, which results in some intended and unintended hilarity. Example: Tracy (Hope) arrives at the First National to find Flat Top (Sinatra) at the scene of the crime.

Flat Top: Drop that gun and turn around, Tracy.

Tracy: If that voice belongs to who I think it does, I may never turn around.

Flat Top: What a pleasure. I've always wanted to have a gun in this guy's back.

Tracy: Yeah, and you can pull it up a little, too.

Flat Top: Sorry, I was gonna blow your brains out!

The sight gags that accompany this Hope/Crosby routine (too bad we can't

see them) had the studio audience falling out of their seats. Hope and Crosby could get a little blue with the Boys in Blue, and then some!

Later, Judy Garland's Snowflake encounters Hope's Flat Top in his abode, and the ad libs start flying. Flat Top has a little light bondage in mind for Mizz Snowflake, but she ain't havin' it! "Please, please," protests Snowflake, "Release me." Flat Top replies, "I only release girls over 38!" Snowflake appeals on bended knee, to which Flat Top counters that she appeals to him in any position! When she reveals that her hand is promised to Vitamin Flintheart (Frank Morgan of the *Wizard of Oz*), Flat Top states that a one-handed wonder still brings his blood to a boil! "Old Ski Slope Nose" meets Rosy Palm! All through the skit Garland and Hope do their damndest to break each other up, with Garland reminding Hope she's reading his lines.

Does this whet your appetite for more, radiophiles? Between the abundant helping of musical numbers, and the cast's kinetic comic delivery, *Dick Tracy in B Flat* should put a smile on faces of young and old alike. Highly recommended.

THE ORIGINAL, CLASSIC STORY DRACULA—PORTRAYED BY CHRISTOPHER LEE. Mono. Distributed by mail, no catalog number. Suggested Price: \$10-\$50.

Continued on page 30

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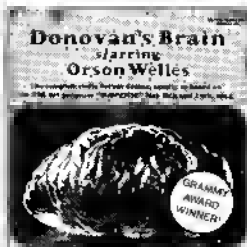
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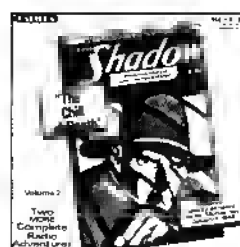
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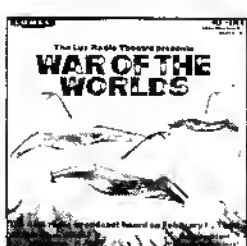
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(Not the Orson Welles) WAR OF THE WORLDS: The Lux Radio Theatre production originally heard Feb. 8, 1955. Stars Dana Andrews, Pat Crowley and William Conrad. Order No: 101



BORIS KARLOFF in the INNER SANCTUM: Two different Inner Sanctums: "Birdsong for a Murderer" and "The Wailing Wall." Extra: "The Black Chapel" (January 6, 1939) "The Mahogany Coffin" with Ted Osborne. Order No: 125



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SUSPENSE! Peter Lorre and Vincent Price star in two complete terror tales. Lorre is featured in "Till Death Do Us Part," a Suspense story from December of 1942. Plus Vincent Price in "Blood Bath" from the 1950 series Escape. Order No: 41

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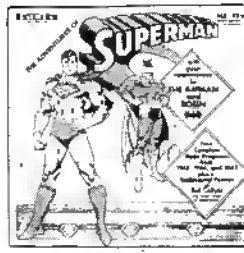
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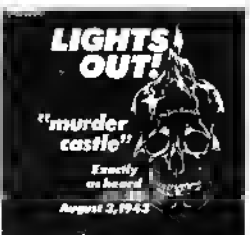
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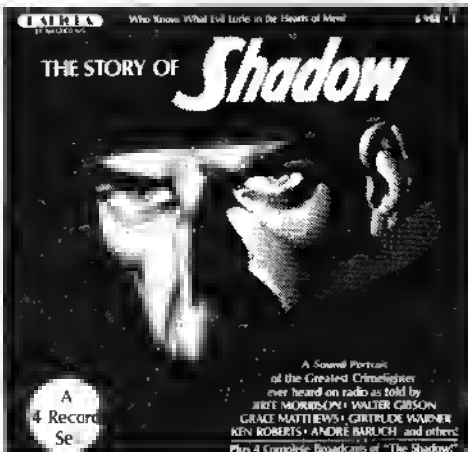
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1966! The Beatles stopped touring, the first Bat-craze was in full swing, the Stones laid *Aftermath* on us, and Hammer Films announced that *Dracula, Prince of Darkness*, the long-awaited sequel to the superb *Horror of Dracula*, was to become a reality.

At the same time, there was a minor monster magazine called *Modern Monsters* trying to find a foothold in a market dominated by *Famous Monsters* and *Castle of Frankenstein*. All of these rip-off 'zines had their own mail order scams, and this one was no different. You send your money and receive your merchandise 10 years later or never!

This record was part of their short-lived catalogue (the magazine only lasted four issues). The problem with this record is not Christopher Lee, but the overall cheapness of the record. The recording quality is poor, and the cover is not much better. The sound effects and music are bland at best. The record was released with a Ballantine Books comic treatment of *Dracula*. At a price of \$3.98 for a two-record set in 1966, you'd think you'd have gotten something better. It's obvious that this was cut on an old three-track machine: sound effects on one, music on two, and Lee on three. Poor Chris has to change characters so fast that it sounds like he's running a one-minute mile while learning his sides.

The problem with *Dracula* has always been the length. What makes this literary

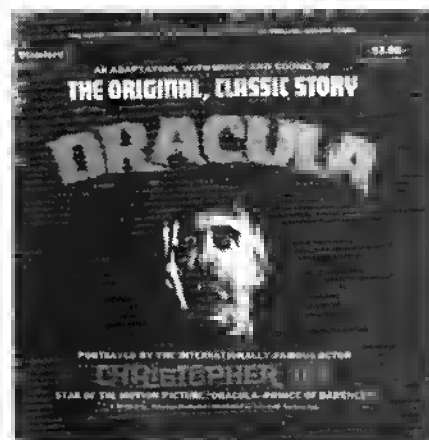


Photo by Randy Meyers

classic hold up is Bram Stoker's diary style of writing. The leisurely pace the reader becomes accustomed to while reading *Dracula* adds to its overall Gothic atmosphere. One can almost feel the Transylvanian winds. What makes this record fall flat is its rushed adaptation and lack of character development.

Chris Lee saves this amateur production with his portrayal of the Count. If this recording had been one tenth as good as *Prince of Darkness*, it would have been worth it. Instead, it deserves a stake, appropriately, through its black vinyl heart.

--Reviews by Jan Alan Henderson ★

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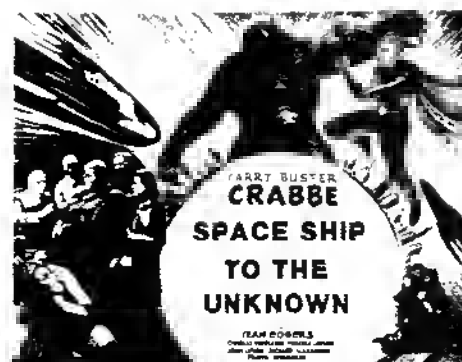
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MISSILE TO THE MOON (b&w) starring Richard Travis, Cathy Downs, K.T. Stevens, Tommy Cook, Gary Clarke, and Laurie Mitchell. Considered a remake of *Cat Women of the Moon*, this cheapie 1959 production tells the story of an expedition to the moon and its encounters with a tribe of women warriors, a giant spider, and a couple of rock men. Several U.S. and international beauty contest winners are featured in small roles. Price: \$15.95.

FIRE MAIDENS OF OUTER SPACE (b&w) starring Anthony Dexter as the leader of a joint British/American expedition to the thirteenth moon of Jupiter. Upon arriving, the astronauts encounter several fire maidens, one old man, and a ridiculous looking monster in this obscure 1956 British film. Director Joe Dante once considered this to be one of the fifty worst horror films ever made. We won't disagree, but after several viewings we actually grew rather fond of it! Judge for yourself and see if this motion picture is in the same league with *Plan Nine From Outer Space* and *Robot Monster*. Musical score consists mainly of classical themes by Russian composer Aleksandr Borodin. Running Time: 72 minutes. Price: \$16.95.





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He made Matrimony a Laughing Matter

Arthur "Dagwood" Lake

As America's favorite bungling husband, Arthur Lake perfected the art of pratfallout for the post-war nuclear family

Article by JAMES L. NEIBAUR

In 1938 Columbia Pictures launched a popular series of zany feature films which affectionately lampooned the domestic life of an imaginary middle-class American family. Sandwiched between the Depression and the post-World War II baby boom, the "Blondie" series, based on Chic Young's popular comic strip, spanned a dozen years and encompassed a respectable 28 titles, many of which still appear on cable and late night television. The unusual longevity of these feature-length "sit-coms" must be credited, in great part, to the casting of Arthur Lake as Blondie's lovable, but perpetually befuddled husband, Dagwood.

Lake, as Dagwood, was the epitome of the fidgety bumbler. An experienced character actor, Lake seasoned his sincere performance with a variety of comic skills, including slapstick, verbal timing, and his unique "Dagwoodian" nervous reactions. He also perfected the "running gag" of

mailman toppling and taught the world the finer points of preparing and devouring his infamous namesake sandwich.



Arthur Lake: a natural as Dagwood Bumstead.

Lake, born Arthur Silverlake on April 17, 1905, was the son of an actress and a circus acrobat. Young Arthur tumbled into the family's vaudeville act at the age of three, but soon went on to portray children in films until about 12. He made his motion picture debut in a 1917 film version of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. A few appearances in silent westerns led to a good role in *Skinner's Dress Suit* (1925) and, ultimately, a contract at Universal Studios, where he appeared in a series of *Sweet Sixteen* comedies. First National Pictures likewise contracted Lake's services to star in their *Harold Teen* series (1928), also based on a popular comic strip.

Continuing to forge a name for himself in frothy films, Lake soon became a contract player at the newly formed RKO Studios, appearing in such pictures as *Dance Hall* (1929), *She's My Weakness*

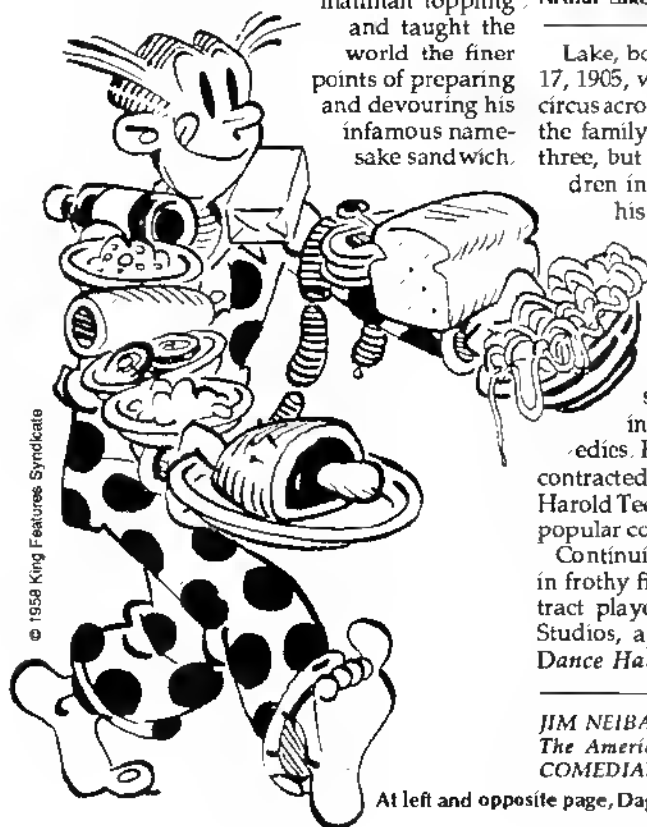
(1930) and *Cheer Up and Smile* (1930). He was Columbia Pictures' first choice to star in the 1930 remake of the 1922 First National silent *Tol'able David*, but eventually, Richard Cromwell was cast in the role originated by Richard Barthelmess. As a freelance character actor, Lake contributed his talents to such films as *Indiscreet* (1931), playing opposite Gloria Swanson; *Orchids for You* (1935) with John Boles; and the comedy classic *Topper* (1937) with suave Cary Grant. In a picture packed with slick comic performances, Lake's puzzled elevator operator still managed to stand out and may well have been responsible for the actor's career "going up."

"I tested for the role of Dagwood with about a dozen other guys," Lake recalled during a 1985 interview. "But since Marion Davies (longtime mistress of newspaper baron William Randolph Hearst was my wife's aunt, I got a lot of support from the Hearst press, who owned King Features Syndicate."

Both Frank Albertson and Eddie Quillan were being seriously considered for the role of Dagwood, but Lake eventually landed the part with the able assistance of Ms. Davies. "It was the Hearst thing that made me sort of a shoo-in," Lake admitted. "You know, my wife (Patricia, a former Wampas Baby Star) and I are the only couple ever to have been married at San Simeon, the Hearst estate."

The title role in *Blondie*, the first film in the series, was originally to have been portrayed by character actress Shirley Deane. Deane had essayed roles in such films as *Charlie Chan at the Circus* and *One in a Million* before being picked for this plum part, but she was replaced by Penny Singleton only a few days into production. "Shirley was very good in the role," recalled Lake, "but a little too intense. When she scolded Dagwood it seemed a little too nasty. Penny made the anger more cute-mad, which worked better. Shirley's dismissal was still a very sad affair at the time."

Although sensitive to his co-worker's plight, Lake claims that he and Singleton "hit it off right away and remained pals." Ed Bernads, however, who wrote and di-



JIM NEIBAUR is author of *TOUGH GUY: The American Movie Macho* and *MOVIE COMEDIANS: The Complete Guide*.

At left and opposite page, Dagwood demonstrates the fine art of sandwich eating.

Continued on page 36

BLONDIE

VON CHIC YOUNG

WIR SIND
IN EINER
STUNDE
ZURÜCK!

GLUT, DANN
NEHME
ICH EIN
HERRLI-
CHES BAD
IN RUHE
UND FRE-

ICH KANN
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IN DER BADE-
WANNE!

RING

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TUN, IHR KÖNNT EURE SCH-
IN MEINEM BADEWAS-

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DER NACH
HEREINK
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rected many of the "Blondie" pictures, recalls the two performers as being very stiff competitors and that the rivalry continued for the duration of the series.

The remaining members of the "Blondie" cast included actor Jonathan Hale, as Dagwood's sharrid boss Mr. Dithers, Larry Simms as Alexander, a.k.a. Baby Dumppling, Marjorie Kent as Cookie, and a trained dog named Boots as the Bumstead pet, Daisy. Although Boots is said to have lived only until November 14, 1947, Lake insists that the same dog was used until the series ended in 1950. "I took that dog along on personal appearance tours that we did for the studio," claimed Lake, "and it was every bit as talented on stage as it was on our pictures."

Blondie was released in 1938 and its success secured the series idea in the collective studio mind. In addition to giving the country a good laugh when it had very little to smile about, young up-and-coming stars, such as Glenn Ford, Lloyd Bridges and Rita Hayworth found experience and exposure in the "Blondie" films. The series also benefited from appearances by veteran character actors such as William Frawley, Gene Lockhart, Emil Sitka and Hans Conried, who turned in a fine performance in *Blondie's Blessed Event* (1940)—the film in which Daisy gave birth to all those puppies and Blondie gave birth to Cookie. In the next film, Baby Dumppling insisted he was too old to be referred to in such infantile terms and insisted that, hereafter, he was to be addressed as Alexander.

The family orientation of the series was especially evident in the sequences that involved Alexander and wily pal, Alvin, played by Danny Mummert. Although Dagwood was basically Alvin's foil in the pictures, Lake recalled that this was not so



Penny Singleton, as Blondie, gives Dagwood and Baby Dumppling one of her patented scoldings.

off-screen. "That kid was terrific," stated Lake. "In the pictures he was a bit of a Dickens, but in reality he was wonderful."

It is interesting to note that while Dagwood was sometimes a stooge in the films, there was actually one "Blondie" movie with a real Stogie. Immediately prior to his re-joining The Three Stooges, in the wake of Curly's illness, Shemp Howard made an appearance in *Blondie Knows Best* (1946). Ed Bernds, who wrote the film recalled, "I knew Shemp for his work in his own series of two-reelers at the studio, so I wrote the part of a near-sighted process server in my 'Blondie' picture for him."

Lake was delighted. "I used to enjoy standing on the set to watch the Stooges work on their short subjects. When you're

doing the sort of comedy that we did, you can learn a lot from watching other performers. Now, I never had to be as wild as the Stooges, but there was a lot of slapstick involved in my role and watching experts like the Stooges was quite a learning experience.

"Working in [*Blondie Knows Best*], with Shemp was great," continued Lake, "because his professionalism was such that he instinctively knew how to act and react in the situations. He was always glad to give tips and pointers to other cast members, and I guess that's what I remember most about him. And he was funny. Even between takes all he did was crack jokes. I think everybody liked Shemp. How could anybody not like him?"

Perhaps the biggest transition in the "Blondie" series was in the 1947 feature *Blondie's Big Moment*, in which Dagwood comes home from vacation to find that Mr. Dithers has sold the business and Dagwood's new boss is Mr. Radcliffe, played by Jerome Cowan. "It was a money thing," explained Lake. "Mr. Hale was a fine dramatic actor who felt typecast by the Dithers role. He went to the studio to get more money, but they refused. As a result, he walked out. It's unfortunate, because I thought he was so great, so believable. Cowan was good at what he did," admitted Lake, "but I just didn't find him as believable as Mr. Hale." Cowan left the series at the end of 1949.

There were even more changes in store for Dagwood at the office. Jack Rice's role of Dagwood's office rival, Ollie, was lengthened and in real life, Rice became a family friend, also working with Lake's sister Florence in the Edgar Kennedy two-reelers at RKO during this same period. Rice died in 1968 at the age of 75.

By the late 1940s, Edward Bernds was the sole director of the "Blondie" films,



Daisy, Baby Dumppling and Dagwood prepare for Cookie's arrival in *Blondie's Blessed Event*.



Jonathan Hale as Dagwood's boss, Mr. Dithers.

having succeeded both Frank Strayer and Abby Berlin. "Bernds was my favorite of the directors we had," Lake stated, "because he seemed to use more slapstick than the other directors, and physical comedy always gets the biggest laughs."

In 1950, the final two "Blondie" films were released. The first, *Blondie's Hero*, featured the durable Dagwood suffering through the army's basic training. The second film, *Beware of Blondie*, had Dagwood assuming the office management for Mr. Dithers, who was re-introduced in the picture. Dithers appeared at the very end of the film, and then it was only a brief shot with his back to the camera. Oddly enough, it wasn't Jerome Cowan or Jonathan Hale. But in a strange way, the series had come full circle, ending with this curious entry that seemingly was ending the "Blondie" stories back at their beginning. Unfortunately, Lake recalled *Blondie's Hero* as the last film and has no recollection of *Beware of Blondie* or the re-introduction of the Dithers character. Bernds, who is credited with directing the film, also is said to have no recollection of it, so *Beware of Blondie* remains a curio, a film that has the same cast and setting as the other "Blondie" pictures, but is somehow not really part of the series.

When enthusiasm for the "Blondie" series turned gray, the pictures came to an end. Lake, who had also been doing Dagwood on radio with Ann Rutherford and Alice White among the Blondies, made two "Blondie" television pilots, one featuring Rutherford, and the other with his real wife and children. Eventually, Lake appeared in 26 episodes of a *Blondie* TV series with Pamela Britton as Blondie and Florenz Ames as Dithers. This series can still be seen in reruns on some cable and local stations.

In the mid-1960s, King Features, which owned the rights to the Columbia-produced "Blondie" films, released them to television with new beginning and end titles featuring the King Features logo. The success of the films spawned a new *Blondie* television series in 1968 with Will Hutchins as Dagwood, Patricia Harty as Blondie, and Jim Backus as Dithers. Mercifully, it lasted only four episodes.

"I thought they were awful," commented Lake. "It's unfortunate, because it was a good cast. Hutchins later told me that the producers of this show used to run my old films and asked him to study my interpretation of Dagwood so that he could copy it. That's rather insulting to an established TV actor like Hutchins."

When the "Blondie" series ended, Lake lost track of most of the players except for Singleton, with whom he appeared in a Dinner Theater production of "No, No Nanette" in 1976.

Jonathan Hale shot and killed himself on February 28, 1966, in his cottage at the Motion Picture Country Home. Staff members of the home stated that he had

been depressed for some time and Lake recalled, "He was always sort of an uptight guy. I had tried to contact him several times after he left the series, but was unsuccessful."

Jerome Cowan died in 1972, Pamela Britton in 1974. Florenz Ames is also thought to be deceased. Marjorie Kent is still alive, but reluctant to talk of her "Blondie" days.

Lake spent his last years residing in Indian Wells, California, playing golf regularly and, "just getting around." He continued to be interviewed and invited to Hollywood functions honoring the stars of the movies' golden age, until his death on January 5, 1987, at the age of 81. It has been said that Arthur Lake as Dagwood was one of the most ingenious pieces of casting in film history. It is certain that the "Blondie" series is composed of some of the most enjoyable films of the time. Few would argue that that the pleasure comes mainly from Lake's likeable portrayal of the American Everyman struggling for dominance in a world where he can't even find his slippers. ★



Daisy, Blondie, Baby Dumpling and Dagwood, the nuclear post-war family, pose below Chic Young's strip of the Bumstead nuptials.



The MONSTER That Challenged The World!

Article by
AL TAYLOR and DAVE EVERITT

1957 was a uniquely productive year in the history of science fiction/monster films. The Arctic gave birth to *The Deadly Mantis*. Italy was terrorized by an overgrown Venusian reptile in *Twenty Million Miles To Earth*. Chicago was overrun by giant grasshoppers in *The Beginning Of The End*. California was plagued by a cubist machine from outer space in *Kronos*. And a team of scientists on a remote Pacific island was subjected to the *Attack Of The Crab Monsters*. But easily the most popular locale for oversized creatures was the desert surrounding the U.S./Mexican border where the beleaguered citizenry

was beset by *The Cyclops*, *The Black Scorpion*, *The Monolith Monsters*, and *The Amazing Colossal Man*, all within the span of a few months.

One of the few films to show more than an average amount of skill and imagination during this epidemic of low budget SF films was *The Monster That Challenged The World*. Although it relied upon many of the traditional elements featured in other genre movies, (radioac-

tivity, a giant creature, and a southwestern setting), *The Monster That Challenged The World* still managed to generate an above average degree of suspense and believability, while maintaining the all-important "sense of wonder" in the eye of its beholders.

THE CREATORS

The Monster That Challenged The World was produced by Arthur Gardner and Jules Levy, and was directed by Arnold Laven. These three men had met while in the Army during World War II. After each had individually pursued his own film career for a few years, they decided to join forces, pool their resources,

AL TAYLOR has written for *FANTASTIC FILMS*, *FANGORIA* and *STARLOG*. DAVE EVERITT, a former editor of *FANGORIA*, co-authored *FILM TRICKS: SFX in the Movies*.

Photos courtesy Al Taylor





Opposite page: Audry Dalton "battles" with the full-sized mechanical creature designed by Augie Lohman in this posed publicity shot. This page: Above, across top, the newly hatched baby Kraken lurches across the lab toward Gail MacKenzie (Dalton) and her daughter (Mimi Gibson) who take refuge in a supply closet. As the monster is about to break through the upper panel of the door, Lt. Twillinger (Tim Holt) races into the lab then, thinking quickly, chops down a steam pipe and attacks the creature with an onslaught of scalding vapor. Across bottom, trailer clips from *TMTCTW*.

and make pictures by incorporating their talents. Working with limited budgets, they made three modestly successful crime films: *Without Warning* (1952), *Vice Squad* (1953), and *Down Three Dark Streets* (1954). United Artists, the distributor for all three pictures, was pleased with the financial returns and decided to back the next movie produced by Levy-Gardner-Laven. At first, the producing trio didn't have any one particular property they wanted to film, but soon their ideas began to solidify. According to director Arnold Laven:

"We had several projects in mind, but those projects did not include *The Mon-*

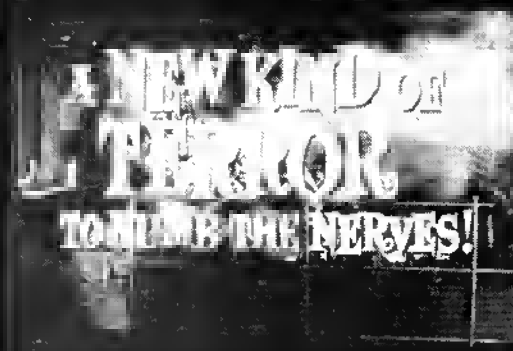
ster That Challenged The World. They were very nebulous and we wanted to get into business quickly. So we met one day and talked about putting our heads together in order to make a more attractive, more sophisticated science fiction film. A science fiction film with Hitchcockian elements of suspense, reality in the storyline, and which put the actors in a position where they could express themselves more as human beings caught in a dilemma than was true with the average science fiction films being made at the time. With that in mind, we started to knock around some ideas."

The plot line for *The Monster That*

Challenged The World was eventually realized by a young woman named Pat Fielder, who was working for Levy-Gardner-Laven as a secretary at the time. "I can't really tell you how Pat Fielder picked up on what we were talking about," mused Laven. "We knew that Pat was a talented girl. Not only was she a marvelous secretary but she had also previously succeeded in publishing material she had written for children. She had a talent for writing and she was also interested in motion pictures, although she had never written a screenplay. Consequently, she took on the assignment and

Continued on next page

Photos courtesy Al Taylor



eventually came up with a science fiction story originally called *The Kraken*. Somewhere along the line Pat had discovered a piece of literature that related to a prehistoric monster which might still have germs of its existence living in the desert sands. From this she developed the plot outline that ultimately became *The Monster That Challenged The World*.

In order to write this story with the utmost care and validity, Pat Fielder thoroughly researched the subject. She consulted all appropriate scientific sources in an attempt to make the monster as believable as possible, and also contacted the Pentagon to map out how the armed forces would react to such a threat as was posed in *The Monster That Challenged The World*. As a result of her military research she discovered that the Navy would be the branch of service responsible for grappling with the situation outlined in her script; consequently, the Twillinger character was changed from an Army to a Navy officer.

Once the screenplay was written to their satisfaction, Gardner, Levy and Laven then had to find a way to produce the story with the best expertise possible within the limited means of their budget. *The Monster That Challenged The World* was made for a little under \$250,000; the film was shot in 18 days of first unit shooting and an additional three days to obtain background footage.

The producers felt that the best means of ensuring cinematic quality was to hire first-rate personnel even though they were working under the restrictions of a minimal budget. Arnold Laven explained, "What we hoped to do was to hire the really top professional people whose backgrounds included the better motion pictures, but who might have been on lay-off...be taking a 'forced vaca-



The "Monster" grapples with Audrey Dalton.

tion,' if you will. We called every guild and every union, plus all of our friends, to find out who might be available during the brief time we had to make our film. Then we tried to contact the finest technicians, hoping we might catch them during a period when they were not involved with other projects and would be available to us."

This resourceful method of putting together a production was highly successful. The respected film composer Heinz Roemheld was a friend of Jules Levy from the producer's assistant directing days. Roemheld had an open period in his schedule and was able to supply *The Monster That Challenged The World* with one of the most haunting and unusual scores of fifties science fiction. Tim Holt, the popular Western star who

had also acted in such distinguished productions as Orson Welles' *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942) and John Huston's *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948), was in semi-retirement from films at the time of the making of *The Monster*. The producers got him interested in the screenplay and were able to lure him away from the ranch he was managing in Kansas.

For the crucial underwater shots during the scuba-diving investigation scenes, Levy-Gardner-Laven were able to get Scotty Welbourne, a first-rate underwater cinematographer who had begun his career as a glamour portrait photographer at Warner Brothers, where Laven had worked as a script supervisor. Assisting Welbourne on the underwater sequences was stuntman/scuba diver Paul Staeder. Laven was forced to rely on the considerable skill of these two men much of the time due to an ear problem which prevented him from doing any deep scuba diving himself. Principal photography was supervised by Lester White.

THE SPECIAL EFFECTS

Perhaps the single most important technician recruited for this production was special effects man Augie Lohman, who was hired to create the mechanical mock-up of the monster. Lohman's experience in special effects was especially suited to the task of devising the giant Kraken; he was the man who had recently engineered the great white whale for John Huston's version of *Moby Dick* (1956).

Through his own research and technical know-how, Lohman, working with sub-contractors, was able to produce a sea beast that was both fearsome and authentically mobile. Laven described the inner workings of this remarkable mechanical creature: "If you took the skin off the monster, what you would see is, basically, a large molded shell, a giant

THE SYNOPSIS

Attempting to immediately establish a sense of scientific reality in the story, the film opens in a semi-documentary fashion. As the audience views a large body of water surrounded by an arid landscape, the narrator supplies a prologue of factual background: "This is the Salton Sea in Southern California," says the voice-over narration. "Four hundred and forty square miles of salt water in the middle of the desert. Two million years ago, this sea was part of the Pacific Ocean. Today, it is completely landlocked...a desolate, almost uninhabited region...an era lost in time..."

Suddenly, an underwater earthquake erupts, rocking the submarine basin of this curious body of water. Ominously, the narrator comments, "This was the beginning..." Later that same day, while

Left Atypical of most B-movie lobby cards, this action-packed photo art from *TMTCTW* shows the "Monster" in action against hero Tim Holt.



Photos courtesy Al Taylor

snail shell, that, I remember, stood some four or five feet from top to bottom. It was just a huge replica of a snail's shell built of a lightweight fiberglass material. Fitted into it, and then stretched up to a height of eleven or twelve feet was what looked like a giant series of tubes and, if you will, erector-set pieces of metal that were designed so that they could move both laterally and vertically through hydraulic and electric machinery. It was really a marvelous device, a beautifully conceived piece of machinery which could not have existed without Augie Lohman's unique personal experience as a special effects man...

"It took three to five men to work the rheostats and other controls that would move the monster either up or down, or frontwards or backwards, or give it a rolling forward movement."

The first full view of the monster was particularly effective. Tim Holt and Hans Conried are in a boat on the Salton Sea when the Kraken suddenly springs up out of the water to one side. The footage of the creature was filmed first and was then rear-projected behind the actors in the boat when the final scene was shot. This dramatic entrance of the monster was quite similar to the appearance some 20 years later of the marauding shark in Steven Spielberg's *Jaws*.

In a film that required the maneuvering of a complex mechanical beast as well as shooting difficult underwater sequences, one might expect that there would have been many irritating snags in the production. On the contrary, the picture was made very smoothly. "It was a pleasure to make," said Laven. "We had spent a great deal of time making sure that production problems which might occur were anticipated before we started." By hiring the best available talent and planning well ahead of the shooting schedule, the makers of *The Monster*



Photos courtesy Al Taylor

Screenwriter Pat Fielder fondly pats Augie Lohman's sculpted model of the "Kraken" sea mollusk.

That Challenged The World were able to bring in their picture on a small budget without any problems, a skill which seems to have eluded many big-budget filmmakers since then.

But even with top-notch technical assistance, the ultimate success of the film rested on the validity of the story. From the start, Levy-Gardner-Laven devoted themselves to this task by developing a convincing script, and then continued to inject intelligent substance into the story when on the shooting stage. "We tried to make the best film possible," said Laven. "Also, we were careful not to condescend to the audience, but attempted only to give them the best of everything we had. I assumed that whoever goes to a science fiction film is both discriminating on one hand, and willing to overlook less sophis-

ticated elements on the other hand. Above all I wanted to appeal to their best taste and judgment."

By first taking into consideration that science fiction fans would be willing to accept the unlikely possibility of a radioactive-created creature, the makers of *The Monster That Challenged The World* rose above the usual conventions of the genre with a carefully constructed story and intelligent direction. With the addition of technical expertise, they offered to the discerning monster-fantasy fans of the fifties a creature picture which stood out among the many competitors in monstrous destruction, especially for those of us who have become overdosed with the overproduced and sometimes disappointing mega-budget SF movies of the last decade. ★

operating from nearby El Centro Air Base, the Navy stages a test parachute jump over the Salton Sea, a routine maneuver which, at first, attracts no attention. That is, until three men involved in this practice drill are found dead, with all the blood and water mysteriously drawn from their horribly shriveled bodies. To add to the mystery, a slimy substance composed of radioactive marine growth has been found covering the bodies.

Led by the Navy's Lieutenant Commander John Twillinger, an underwater investigation team goes beneath the surface of the recently disturbed Salton Sea to search for possible causes relating to these bizarre deaths. Their Geiger counter readings eventually lead the Navy diving team to the Kraken, a giant prehistoric mollusk with shell-like scales and a protruding tusk-like mouth. Radioactivity in the sea has revived the monster while the recent earthquake has also released the creature's eggs.

During their attempts to combat this

menace, the Navy's most crucial task is to destroy the eggs before the monstrous species can multiply. The job becomes more difficult and desperate when some of the eggs flow into a complex canal system. Twillinger and his men race against time to destroy all the spawn before humans are faced with the terrifying possibility of fighting an entire race of Kraken.

The film spirals to a nerve-wracking climax in the laboratory of Dr. Jess Rogers (Hans Conried), where one of the eggs is being held for study. The Kraken hatches

and goes on a grisly rampage until it eventually traps Rogers' secretary (Audrey Dalton) and her little daughter inside a closet. As the creature slowly batters through the closet door with its hideous head, Twillinger arrives and frantically devises a rescue scheme. He diverts the Kraken's attention, allowing the woman and the daughter to run to safety, and, as the monster closes in on him, he chops down a steam pipe and destroys the creature with an onslaught of live steam. ★

THE MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD

CAST

Lt. Cmdr. John Twillinger.....Tim Holt
Gail MacKenzie.....Audrey Dalton
Dr. Jess Rogers.....Hans Conried
Sandy.....Mimi Gibson
Johnson.....Jody McCrea
Sanders.....William Swan
Lt. Bob Clemens.....Harlan Warde

CREDITS

Black and White Running time: 83 minutes
Produced by Arthur Gardner and Jules Levy
Directed by Arnold Laven
Story by David Duncan
Screenplay by Pat Fielder
Music by Heinz Roemheld
Principal Photography by Lester White
Underwater Photography by Scotty Welbourne
Special Effects by Augie Lohman

1957 Released by United Artists

Forrest J Ackerman Remembers

The Thief of Bagdad

Travel back with FJA to Grauman's Egyptian Theater, in the 1920s, when Silent Films Spoke for Themselves

Nostalgia by
FORREST J ACKERMAN

In 1924, I was seven and a half years old. As I sat in the elegant theater seats of the Grauman's Egyptian Theater on Hollywood Boulevard, my young eyes bulged out of their sockets and my breath came in the same short pants I was wearing. Upon that magical screen I saw:

A fire-breathing dragon (Siegfried's Fafnir actually preceded the "Bagdrag" by a year, but I didn't catch up with Lang's monster until perhaps 1927 or '28). A cavern of flames.



Graphics courtesy of Forrest J Ackerman

FJA invites Filmfax readers back to Grauman's for his remembrance of *The Thief of Bagdad*.



The interior of Grauman's Egyptian Theater was an extravagant masterpiece of Egyptian architecture, ornamentation, gilding, and thousands of handpainted hieroglyphic motifs.

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A forest of tree-men. An Old Man of the Sea. A huge sub-oceanic spider. A gigantic idol. A magic seeing-eye crystal. A winged horse. A stairway to the moon. A cloak of invisibility. And a flying carpet.

Ah, yes, and a chest of magic powder: make a wish, dash a pinch to the ground, and lo! your wish materialized!

And all of these wonders were in a single magical motion picture, *The Thief of Bagdad*.

I saw the word "ecstasy" on the screen for the first time and that was exactly the emotion that flooded my being as I dreamed night after night of that wondrous film of fantastic adventure.

I could spend a day or two writing a whole synopsis of the film, but I question the wisdom of that when I have right here in my archives, and am willing to share with the readers of *Filmfax*, the very souvenir book from the film. It cost 25 cents back then, but who could place a value on it today. I doubt more than a handful of *Filmfax* readers have ever seen a copy and I wouldn't dream of parting with mine for longer than it took to reproduce the following pages for your entertainment.

Doug Fairbanks himself wrote the original story under the nom-de-screen Elton Thomas. Lotta Woods was the scenario editor and author of the adaptation you are about to read. William Cameron Menzies of *Things to Come* fame was the art director and Arthus Edeson (who nine years later would photograph *The Invisible Man*) shot this silent masterpiece.

But, time's a thief—Let's waste no more with preliminaries. On with the show!

'The THIEF OF BAGDAD'

An Arabian Nights Fantasy



As played by DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

Written for the Screen by ELTON THOMAS • • • *Retold in Story form by* LOTTA WOODS



AAINST the velvet blackness of the desert sky, the low-hanging stars gleam in brilliant points of light. Below, picked out by their light, is a lonely group. A Holy Man drones over and over again the lesson he is teaching to a little, brown-skinned, naked boy. The child listens, his eyes fixed on the stars, until it seems to him that the very stars themselves spell out in star clusters the words of the lesson: "Happiness Must Be Earned."

Bagdad, magic city of the East, lay dreaming in the sunshine of a thousand years ago and, from far-off kingdoms, three Princes turned their greedy eyes thereto.

For thus the word had gone forth: A moon hence may suitors come from all the East to seek in marriage the hand of Bagdad's royal Princess.

The word came to the Kingdom of the Mongols and to India and to Persia and to the Princes thereof, and these Princes wholly resolved to win the Princess, departed each from his own kingdom.

Now, on this same day, Ahmed, a thief of Bagdad, pursued his aimble-fingered way and, as fruit of his dishonest calling, there came to his hand a magic rope.

Escaping from the owner of the rope, Ahmed made use of its magic powers to climb to a nearby window and found himself within the walls of a mosque. Never before in all his life had he set foot in a mosque.

Within, a Holy Man expounded his doctrine.

Ahmed listened. For a moment he was confounded by this, his first contact with Good, but he recovered himself and flouted the Holy Man with rude gesturing, loudly shouting the tenets of his own creed:

"I see what I want—and I take it. Paradise is a fool's dream and Allah is a myth."

Then unhooked by the Holy Man, he flung himself from the mosque and came in time to his own evil den where he lived with one other, a Bird of Evil who fawned upon him to share his loot.

"Behold this rope," said Ahmed. "It is a magic rope. With it we can scale the highest walls."

A moon waxed and waned.

Through Bagdad's gates a train of laden porters came. They bore rare trappings for the Palace and viands to feast the suitors who, on the morrow, would come to sue for the hand of the Princess.

Ahmed, the thief, and Bird of Evil, creeping from their den, beheld this wealth pass by and joined them to the end of the train hoping thereby to win an entrance to the Palace.

Rebuked, they whispered cunningly together and marked the high wall of the Palace with the sign of Ahmed.

"To-night," they said, "with the magic rope."

That night Ahmed and Bird of Evil came to the foot of the

Palace wall and Bird of Evil waited below while Ahmed, by the aid of the magic rope, surmounted the wall and made entry to the Palace. Once inside, he moved stealthily about until he came into a treasure room.

There, as he hurried in a chest of jewels, his hand was stayed by the tinkle of soft music. Forgetting his rope, he followed the sound. It led him to a room where—but just left by her slaves—the Princess lay asleep under a canopy of silken gauze.

He looked—went away—came back and looked again. Vainly he tried to drag himself back to the treasure chest. Finally he found himself close to the couch of the sleeping Princess, crouched there, listening to her soft breathing. Discarding indifferently the string of priceless pearls he had brought from the treasure room, he picked up one of the tiny slippers that still bore the warm impress of the Princess' foot. He examined it with curious interest.

Then, a strange new thrill. The Princess moved in her sleep and her slender white hand fell athwart the rough brown fist of the thief. Gently he moved to disengage it. The Princess was roused. She tossed aside her silken coverlet and it fell across his huddled form, hiding him from discovery through all the hubbub of alarm that followed.

Only one person—a Mongol slave girl—glimpsed him and she was silenced by the threat of his dagger. So he escaped, without his magic rope, whose loss troubled him not at all, and bearing with him the little silken slipper, his only booty save the memory of the Princess' loveliness.

Next day the Princess came with her slave girls to a high pavilion which overlooked the courtyard of the Palace. It was the Princess' birthday and suitors were coming from all the East. The robbery of the night before was forgotten in the excitement of this new interest.

The fluttering Princess bade a slave girl to read her fortune in the sand tables whose sands had been fetched from Mecca itself.

Blown gently by the breath of the sand reader, the sands shaped a rose.

The Slave of the Sand Board expounded the meaning thereof.

"Whoso of thy suitors first toucheth the rose-tree in the Palace courtyard, he will be thy husband," she said.

The Mongol slave girl, noting the deep interest the Princess evinced in this prophecy slipped furtively away.

The Princess mused over her fortune. *Continued on next page*

All that morning had Ahmed, the thief, brooded over the little silken slipper of the Princess, neglecting to follow his usual calling. Like a lodestone the slipper had drawn him to the Palace and, high up in a perch of leaves and vines that overlooked the pavilion of the Princess, he secretly watched the lovely maiden of his dreams.

Bird of Evil, trailing him, found him in his hidden refuge. He read in the thief's brooding eyes the secret of his heart. With sly hints and innuendos he pointed out to Ahmed that even a Princess might be stolen if one were master of craft and knew the secrets of subtle drugs that drowsed.

Cupidity shone again in the eyes of the thief and he and his companion climbed down from their perch bent on finding a way into the Palace.

The throb of a huge drum gave warning to the Princess that suitors were at the Palace gates, and, from her high vantage point, she watched them as they came. Scarce did she breathe as each drew near the rose-tree.

There came the glowering Indian Prince—proud and haughty.

Praise Allah, he touched not the rose-tree.

The Persian, fat and gross and sleepy, followed after.

He, too, failed to touch the rose-tree, and the Princess breathed freely again.

Now came the Mongol—cold and impassive. The Princess, frozen with dread, watched his progress with painful interest.

Close on the heels of the Mongol Prince came another.

He was announced as "Ahmed, Prince of the Isles, of the Seas, and of the Seven Palaces." In contrast to the luxury and state of the others, he came with one attendant, a pigmy fellow in clothes many times too large for him.

But the garments of Ahmed lacked naught of splendor for they had been pilfered from the richest bazaars of Bagdad.

The Mongol Prince watched this new arrival with suspicion, but his attention was diverted by the voice of the Mongol slave girl addressing him in his own tongue.

From behind a lattice she whispered to him furtively that the superstitions of the Princess were centered on the rose-tree.

To the Princess, the coming of the Prince of the Seas seemed a reprieve. She watched his progress in simple state and her eyes shone and she prayed within her heart that he might be the first to touch the rose-tree.

Then her face blanched with horror. She shrank against the parapet, trembling and unnerved.

The Mongol Prince was walking with grave deliberation toward the rose-bush. He was reaching forth his hand to pluck a rose.

Strange is the way of destiny!

A hee, disturbed in its meal, flew from the rose and menaced the out-stretched hand of the Mongol Prince. Brushing it aside with his fan, he set its course directly toward Ahmed. Its sharp sting pierced the sensitive ear of Ahmed's spirited horse. The animal sprang unexpectedly from the ground and tossed its unprepared rider straight into the heart of the rose-tree.

Ahmed, none the worse for his experience, descended from the bush bearing in his hand a rose he had plucked in his flight.

So quickly was the whole incident over that none save two had witnessed it, the Mongol Prince and the peeping Princess. The angered and suspicious Mongol went his way into the Palace but the princess clasped her hands to her beating heart in an ecstasy of joy.

In the pageantry of the Prince's entrance to the Palace, the Prince of the Seas slipped unnoticed into the garden under the Princess' pavilion. He drenched the rose with the drug of drowsiness and, unseen by the Palace attendants, he climbed to the pavilion.

The maiden in love is always a sweet compound of modesty and boldness. The Princess saw in Ahmed, "The Prince of the Seas," the suitor chosen for her by Allah and the rose he offered her seemed a precious omen.

With shy delight she showed him the rose shaped in the sands and, as she explained its mystic meaning, her soft white fingers fell once more athwart his rough brown hand.

Once more he knew that sweet wild thrill.

Breathless with the urge of it, he pressed a kiss upon her hand and, in a moment, they were in each other's arms, conscious of naught save the exquisite fervor of their love.

Ahmed scarce knew with what dissembling he regained possession of the drenched rose and made his departure from the pavilion. He was aware only of an overpowering desire to flee from a place where he did not belong—from a sensation for which he was unfit.

He looked about dazedly for an opportunity to escape from the garden but he was engulfed in the machinery of state and borne along to the throne room. Here, according to the age-long custom of her House and the will of her high-born father, the Princess was to indicate her choice among her suitors.

Ahmed was scarce recovered from his daze when the ring of choice was pressed upon his finger by the chief eunuch.

Overcome with the shame of his imposition, Ahmed detached himself from the Caliph's train and stood alone in the great hall from whence the others had gone to the feast room.

As he stood there pondering how he might reach the Princess, the Mongol slave girl passed him with a stare of recognition.

So it was that while Ahmed was finding his way to the garden bent on confessing his shame, the Mongol slave searched out the Counselor of the Mongol Prince and told him that this Prince of the Seas was no Prince, but a common thief.

The Counselor reported to his master and the Mongol Prince denounced Ahmed to the Caliph and nobles of Bagdad.

The Princess heard her lover's confession with bewildered amazement—but, through it all, she read the story of his love and his repentance and, at the last, she bade him keep her ring and her love, the while she begged him to flee from the merciless wrath of her father.

But Ahmed would not flee. He was in a mood to expiate his crime and, resisting not, he was dragged before the Caliph.

Because he was a thief he was flogged until he swooned. Because of the trick he had performed against his ruler, he was condemned to be torn asunder by the great ape.

Warned of the punishment to be meted out to him, the Princess bribed the guards to spare his life and, bruised and battered as he was, he was yet set in safety into the dark shadows of the streets.

The Caliph would have compelled the Princess to choose among the real Princes who remained. Urged by the Slave of the Sand Board to forget not the prophecy of the sands, she temporized. She begged her father to leave the matter to chance. "Send them away," she pled. "Let them return at the seventh moon bearing rare treasure. Who brings the rarest, I will wed."

So it was left and so Bird of Evil explained it to Ahmad the next morning. For, when the tigers that were set at night to guard the Palace gates were led away to their daytime quarters, Bird of Evil crawled through their tunnels to the streets and found Ahmed near the Palace wall where he had brooded the night away.

"They will return at the seventh moon," he said. "If you would have the Princess, return with me through these tunnels."

But Ahmed would have none of him, and, when Bird of Evil nagged him through the streets, he took refuge in the same mosque where but yesterday he had flouted the Holy Man.

To the Holy Man he bared his bruised soul and the Holy Man convinced him that on the bedrock of humility he might build a new life.

While Ahmed drank in the teachings of the Holy Man, the Mongol Prince instructed his Counselor to remain in Bagdad, disguised from the recognition of the guards.



"From time to time I will send you men in the guise of porters," he said. "Build me an army within the walls."

And the Princess, turning to the tables of sand for comfort, found that the rose persisted. So she nourished a tiny hope for the future.

The Holy Man brought Ahmed to the gates of the city and set him on the path of his adventures, saying:

"At the end of this way is a silver chest that doth contain the greatest magic. Go forth to seek it. Be brave. Control thy destiny."

Taking from his finger the ring of choice, Ahmed split it into two rings with a stroke of the sword the Holy Man had given him.

"Give this to her who hath already my heart," he told the Holy Man, and went forth alone to test his soul.

At a caravansary in the desert, a day's journey from Bagdad, the three Princes took leave of each other, promising to meet there again at the end of the sixth moon.

The Mongol Prince, with suave courtesy, wished the other good fortune, second only to his own. And ere their trains were well started toward their own countries, he set spies to follow each.

But Ahmed:

He traveled far from Bagdad and came at length to the defile that led to the Mountains of Dread Adventure.

"I seek a magic chest," he told the Hermit there.

The Hermit regarded him speculatively.

"Many have gone this way," he said, "but none returned."

Then he described what dangers dire and manifold, what fires and floods, what ravaging beasts and birds, what spirits of earth and sea infested the way.

Yet was Ahmed's resolve firm.

So did the Hermit give him a talisman.

"And thy courage fail not," he said, "thou mayst live to reach the Cavern of Enchanted Trees. Touch with this talisman the midmost tree."

And Ahmed fared onward.

Within the Kingdom where he bade and forbade, the Mongol Prince awaited the reports of his spies.

So came a runner telling him that, while the Persian Prince had slumbered in his litter, his chief attendant had purchased for him in the bazaars of Shiraz a rug of such magical properties that it would carry one through the air whithersoever it was directed. And the fat and torpid Persian Prince was convinced that this rug was the greatest rarity in the world.

Came another runner telling that a driven slave had clambered to the lofty head of a forgotten idol near Kandahar and plucked from its eye-socket a crystal of such magical properties that in it one could see whatsoever he desired to see. And the arrogant and purse-proud Indian Prince for whom this crystal was secured was convinced that it was the greatest rarity in the world.

Then the Mongol Prince smiled a crafty smile and conferred with his court magician, a man of foul favor. And after he had thus conferred, he sailed to the Island of Wak where the court magician wrested from its sacred shrine an apple of such magical properties that it would cure any sickness, no matter how grievous. So, convinced that his treasure was the greatest rarity in the world, the Mongol Prince smiled anew his crafty smile and commanded a runner that he make haste to Bagdad and gave order that at the end of the sixth moon the Princess be given a deadly poison.

This was the case of the three Princes, but as regards Ahmed:

After many days and nights he came to the Valley of Fire. A surging wall of flame barred his advance. He plunged through this to find another and another. Then his unaccustomed flesh shrank, his undisciplined soul rebelled, but the ring of choice upon his finger became a cool band of courage and he persevered, coming at length to a cooling stream of sweet waters.

So, praising Allah for his cleansing fires he fared onward.

Coming nigh unto the Cavern of Enchanted

Trees he would have entered therein but for a prodigious dragon that came snarling and bellowing from between two beetling crags. So he fought the dragon until it perished and he won past it into the Cavern of the Enchanted Trees. The midmost tree, when he had touched it with the Hermit's talisman, cracked and stretched and spoke to him, directing him where he might come upon the Midnight Sea.

So he left that place and fared onward many days and when he had come to the Midnight Sea, the Old Man thereof sent him many fathoms below the surface of the sea in search of a star-shaped key.

When he had found the star-shaped key, Ahmed felt himself clasped in the hairy arms of a vile and monstrous sea-spider. Which when he had killed, he would have returned to the surface of the sea, but that his ears were ravished with sweet sounds and certain daughters of the sea would have tempted him to stay with them and be the king of their fairy caverns. But, resisting temptation, he came again to the Old Man of the Sea who told him that his star-shaped key would unlock the stable of the winged horses.

"Take the white horse that nibbleth at thy right hand," he said, "for he alone knoweth the way to the Citadel of the Moon."

So, even as the Old Man of the Sea had said, Ahmed climbed to the cloud-borne abode of the winged horses and took from thence the white horse that nibbled at his right hand.

And the winged horse traveled with him far up the pathway of the sky and, after many days, he came to the base of the flight of a thousand steps that led to the far Citadel of the Moon. Up to this silver shrine Ahmed fared alone. And there, wrapped about in a cloak of invisibility, was a silver chest that fitted itself to the palm of his hand.

His heart overflowed with gratitude to Allah. He felt within himself the power to do good, to make amends for all his grievous past.

At the caravansary in the desert the three Princes met according as they had planned. Each displayed his rare treasure and each believed his own the rarest.

In the breast of the Mongol Prince was hidden the knowledge that by now the Princess would have succumbed to the poison he had ordered.

With his customary suavity he suggested that the Indian Prince put his crystal to use and discover whether the Princess had waited as she pledged.

The crystal disclosed the desperate illness of the Princess—showed her surrounded by physicians helpless to give aidance and agonized over by her royal father.

Mindful that the Caliph had promised the throne of Bagdad to the fortunate suitor who won his daughter, the Persian and the Indian were impatient to go to her assistance. The Persian offered his rug to convey them and the Mongol pointed out that the apple might save her life if they arrived in time.

On the magic carpet the three Princes flew across the waste lands to Bagdad and appeared without warning in the sleeping-chamber of the Princess. With every appearance of sympathetic solicitude, the Mongol Prince made his way to the bedside of the dying maiden and by the magic of the healing that was inherent in the golden apple, he restored her to glowing health.

Far away at the flat rock within the defile in the Mountains of Dread Adventure, the flying horse alighted so that Ahmed might dismount. Then it flew away to its stable above the clouds.

The Hermit of the defile came to meet Ahmed. He saw the silver chest and gravely salaamed to the man who bore it.

"Only its rightful heritor can carry that magic chest," he said. "Thou hast won the power to do good than which there is no greater happiness."

He gestured toward the box in explanation of its uses. Ahmed, listening, pondered in his heart the secrets of the silver chest. Then he scattered from it some of the seeds it contained and saw before him a horse to his needs and a garb suited to the quest before him.

So he mounted and rode away toward Bagdad, wondering if now he might fairly compete for the hand of the Princess.

To the Princess came the knowledge that health had been restored to her. She begged her father to explain how this had come about.

Each in his turn the princely suitors claimed the credit of her cure.

Continued on next page





"I," said the Mongol Prince, "with my golden apple, I saved your life."

"Not so," said the Indian Prince, "I—by discovering your plight in my magic crystal—I saved your life."

"They claim too much," said the Persian Prince. "I—with my rug—I saved your life."

And, while they argued among themselves, the little Slave of the Sand Board crept to the Princess' side and looked into the magic crystal.

She whispered to her mistress: "He cometh. He cometh. Gain time." She held the crystal up for the Princess to see.

The Princess gazed into the crystal and pressed her hands to her lips to stifle a cry of joy. For what she saw was Ahmed riding boldly, his head upflung, and he held high above his head the magic silver chest.

The Princess reflected for a moment and then summoned her father.

"Who can decide which of these gifts is rarest?" she said. "Without the crystal they would not have known, without the carpet they could not have come, without the apple they could not have saved me. Each had been useless without the other two."

Perhaps the Mongol Prince might have argued the matter but at this moment his Counselor, advised of events by the Mongol maid, came into the room.

Behind his fan he whispered to his Prince: "You have twenty thousand troops within the walls," and, soothed by this assurance, the Mongol Prince, with his customary soft composure spoke of taking quiet thought on the matter through the night.

Through the night twenty thousand Mongol troops threw off their disguises and took possession of Bagdad.

The Caliph and Persian and Indian were thrown into a cell and told that morning held death for them in vats of boiling oil.

Guards were sent to put away the attendants of the Princess and keep watch over her during the night.

When morning came, the Mongol Prince was comfortably ensconced on the throne of Bagdad. He ordered the Princess fetched before him.

Benumbed by the events of the night she came. Once more the cup of joy had been dashed from her lips. The hope roused by the sight of her beloved in the crystal was drowned in her despair. Unprotesting—she heard the Mongol Prince



bid her prepare for marriage to him and silent—numbed—she was led away.

Ahmed, pulling up at a well on the desert to make his ablutions and pray the dawn prayer, learned from frightened refugees that the Mongols had taken Bagdad. He mounted his horse and galloped to the gates of the city.

"Open wide the gates of Bagdad!" he ordered, and when the Mongol guard in the gate tower voiced a contemptuous refusal, he opened his magic chest and scattered seeds broadcast.

The Mongols on the battlemented walls watched in fascinated dismay.

Below them there appeared out of nothingness a group of shining white soldiers.

The guards bent lower to watch.

Ahmed's hand flashed in sowing motion—once—twice—thrice—the Mongols lost count.

And with every motion of that sowing hand, there appeared on the plain below unnumbered hosts of silver clad warriors.

Stark panic seized the Mongol soldiers. With one accord they fled from the wall, shouting warnings to their fellows within the town.

Out from their houses came the townspeople and into the town thronged the great white army.

Like a stream of white lava it poured through the town, covering all the streets with its wide expanse.

Before its steady oncoming, the horrid black shapes that were the Mongol army melted into nothingness.

Warned of the coming of the gleaming multitude, the Counselor rushed panic-stricken to the Mongol Prince to tell what he had heard.

"Set my guards at the Palace gates," his Prince ordered and hastened from the throne room.

Continued on next page



But, ere he had fled far, came a runner, kneeling to say: "Great Khan, every way of escape is blocked."

Then did the Mongol Prince bare his neck and order the runner to sever his head from his body.

The runner raised his sword, but the Mongol slave girl checked its fall.

"The flying carpet," she reminded, "and the Princess."

Again the smile of craft envisaged the Mongol Prince. He hurried away nor knew that the little Slave of the Lute, listening behind the arras, had caught the words and crept from the room.

To the sleeping-chamber of the Princess, where the rug was under guard, the Mongol Prince betook himself.

He ordered the spreading of the rug, and then—with a look of cunning and desire—his gaze encompassed the Princess. He strode toward her.

And while the Princess fled from his pursuit, the little Slave of the Lute plowed her way through the crowded

streets and bore to Ahmed the word of the peril of the Princess.

Ahmed could not wait for his army. With orders to a lieutenant to rescue all who were still under the yoke of the Mongols and to follow him to the Palace, he sped away.

It facilitated his speed to don the cloak of invisibility and a silver whirlwind swept through the Palace, knocking aside soldiers, furniture, whatever impeded.

The Mongol Prince had harried the Princess until she swooned.

His Counselor had joined him and, together, they placed the unconscious Princess on the rug and made the magic signs to lift it in flight.

They braced themselves for the uplift and then—they saw nothing and heard nothing—but they felt the impact of a lithe, muscular body and they measured their lengths on the floor.

Then they gasped in amaze as invisible hands lifted the Princess and carried her up the bridge that led from the room. Bent on possessing her, the Mongols followed.

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Translating Fantasy Into Pictures

Fantasy is elusive. Its texture is woven of the slender threads of dreams. Its people move in a fairyland, where everything rests upon the light and airy foundation of fancy. This is the very spirit of "The Thief of Bagdad" and to translate it into pictures was a thing that conscripted all the artistic, mechanical and imaginative talents of many people. Into this picture has gone—not so many million feet of lumber or kegs of nails—but the very heart and ambition of scores of loyal workers that Mr. Fairbanks gathered around him.

First of all, there was the basic fact that when a thing is photographed, it is given substance and reality. This was overcome by building acres of glazed floor, which reflected the buildings, gave gleaming high lights along the base lines, destroyed the reality of solid foundations. This imparted the illusion of floating so that

the magnificent structures, as ascend, seem to have the fantasy rather than of being set firm

To further the illusion, designed out of proportion windows and decorative effective of the unreal.

Even the tinting and toning of the action; a roseate glow for where the terrifying monster the beautiful golden haze glowed throughout all the fantasy and that marvelous medium of illusion.

Then, lest the bald reality banks has provided an incense permeate the atmosphere of



d, dropping his cloak, revived the fainting Princess. The soldiers handed the Mongol Prince and his Counselor to the untender mercies of the Palace eunuchs. Then, as the reunited lovers would have clasped each other in arms of love, came an influx of grateful friends.

Caliph, gladly bestowing his daughter upon their respective husbands, was profuse in his expressions of satisfaction.

Armenian, the Indian, the dignitaries of the court, all gathered over and over again their phrases of fervent

too much.

He then bethought him again of his magic cloak. He slipped it round his Princess and himself. Scarce would it be long when both and the astonished court caught the twinkling light as they floated away from them. They followed.

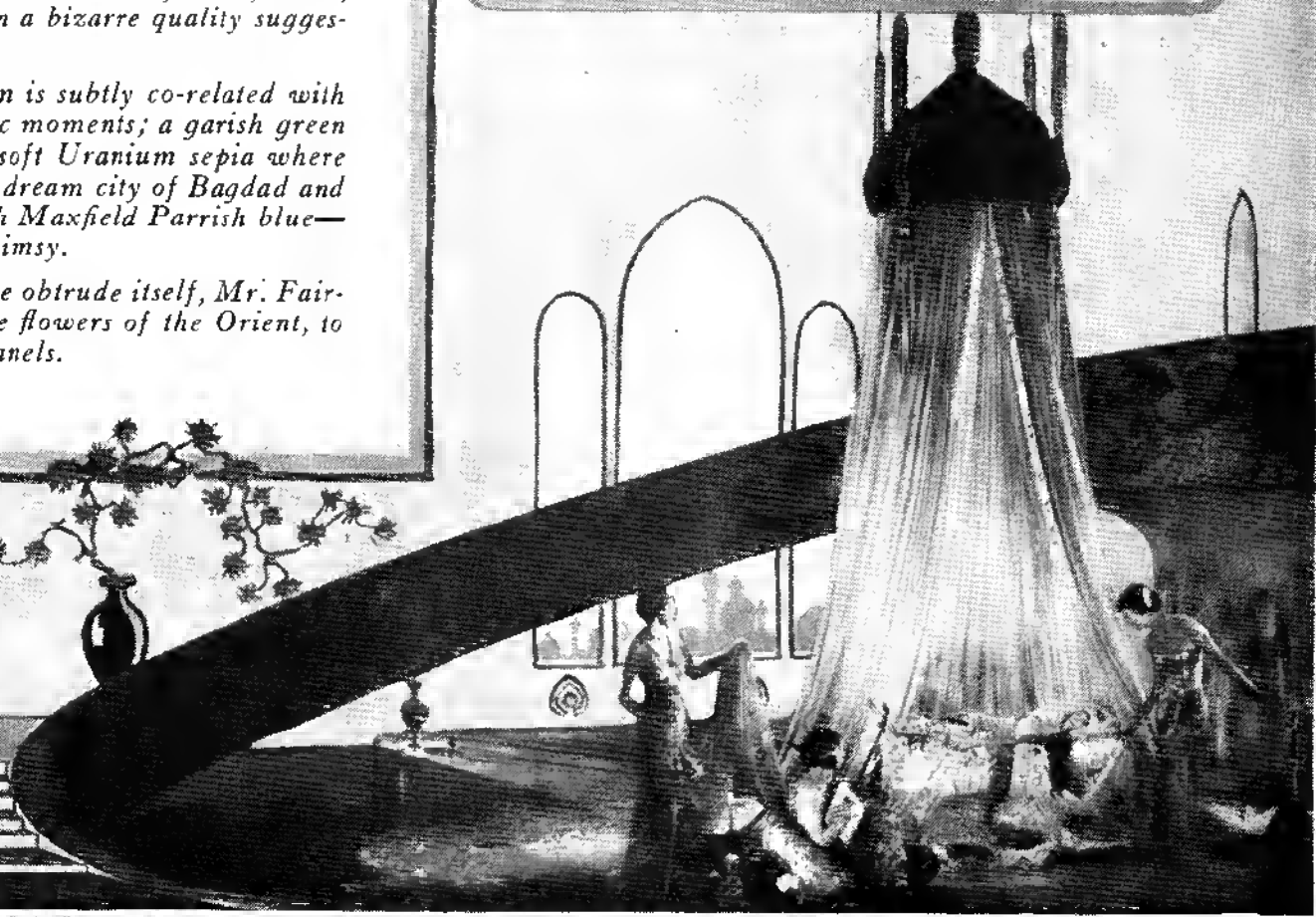
But to the magic rug tripped the twinkling feet. He dropped the cloak and again the lovers were dis- waving farewells to the grateful court, they floated away from the Palace, over the heads of the doting populace, out into the desert night and up toward the stars that spelled in Persian: "Happiness Must Be Earned."

with their shadows growing darker as they passed the fantastic quality of hanging from the clouds and falling like rain upon the earth.

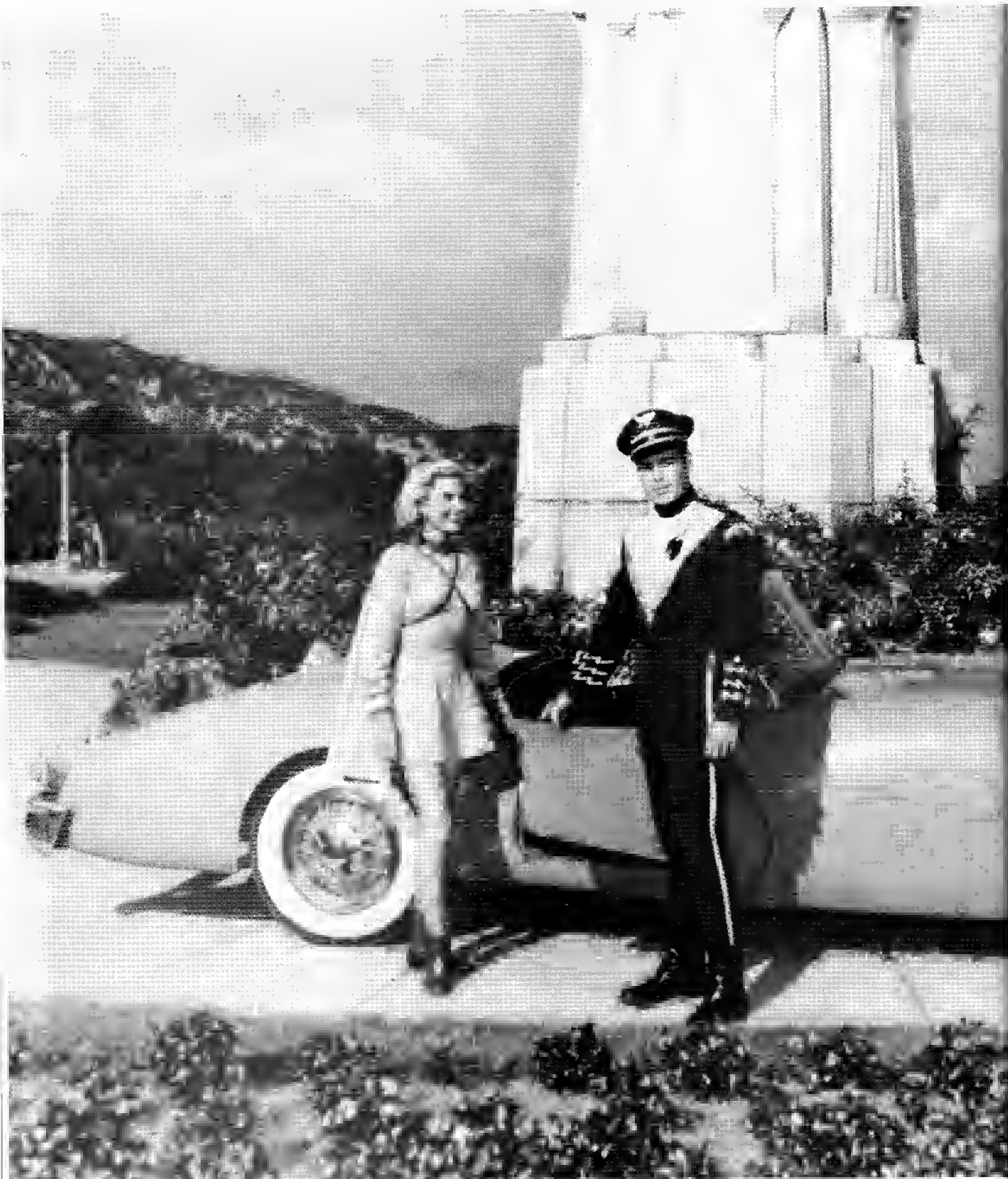
the environment of the characters was not of human fact. Flowers, vases, stairs, and architecture were given a bizarre quality sugges-

ing of the film is subtly co-related with the romantic moments; a garish green appears; a soft Uranium sepia where it flows about the dream city of Bagdad and the feeling of rich Maxfield Parrish blue—imaginative whimsy.

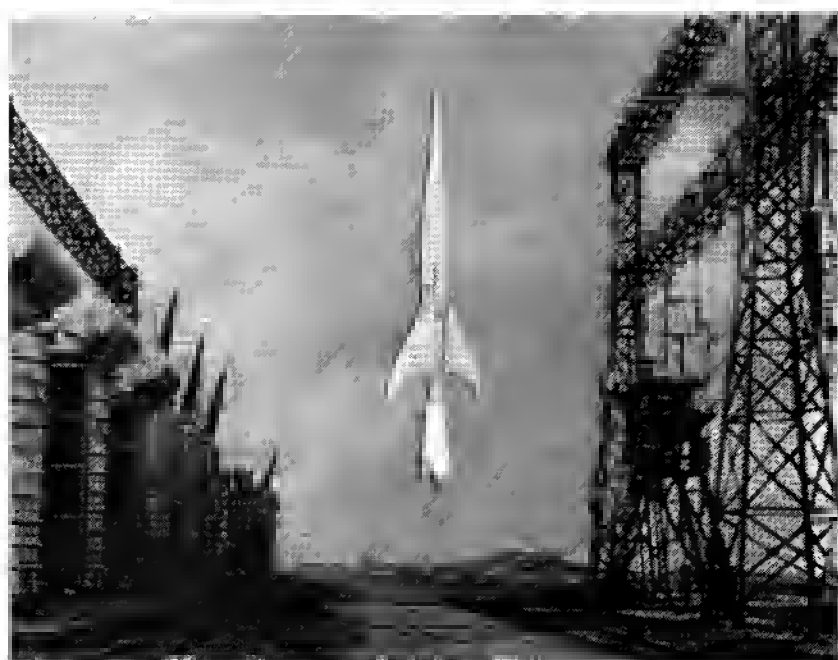
of the theatre obtrude itself, Mr. Fair- born of the flowers of the Orient, to the Pogany panels.



EARLY TELEVISION *Small Screen Media from the Fifties*



Above, Sally Mansfield (Vena), Richard Crane (Rocky Jones) and the show's "futuristic" Jaguar sport coupe outside the Griffith Park Observatory during the patrolship, the "Orbit Jet," comes in for a landing at the United Planets' landing facility (actually a bank of high voltage electrical transformers.)



Welcome to the World
of Tomorrow...1950s Style!

ROCKY JONES

SPACE RANGER

Article by ALAN ASHERMAN

ROCKY JONES...SPACE RANGER...Space Ranger...space ranger, the announcer's voice echoed as the title lettering appeared, floating in space, accompanied by impressive music. The weekly series had silvery rocketships, huge spaceports, floating space stations, a square-jawed hero, a mini-skirted heroine, a friendly second-in-command, and a silver-haired professor who knew *everything*. Just what a 1950s kid wanted in a television space opera. But after 39 weeks it was gone.

Some of today's television reference books omit *Rocky Jones*, while others give only scraps of information or misinformation. It's been listed as having lasted for fewer adventures than it actually did, or identified as a network series when it was actually syndicated. And it's almost never mentioned that the *Rocky Jones* pilot was produced two years before the series' TV debut. Most important, no one ever seems to mention that it was lots and lots of fun.

The earliest TV space operas were aired live, and only a small number of their episodes survive today in kinescope form. The only filmed footage in *Captain Video*, *Space Patrol*, *Tom Corbett*, *Rod Brown*, *Buck Rogers*, *Captain Z-RO* and others were commercials or special effects shots. Those shows were technically limited by small

Continued on next page

shooting of "Beyond the Curtain of Space." Top right, Rocky Jones'

Photos courtesy Jan Alan Henderson

sets, restricted camera movements, and occasional strobing, giving them an overall "flat" look. The first space opera produced exclusively on film for TV was *Rocky Jones, Space Ranger*, and for this reason alone it deserves much more attention than it has ever received.

The Space Rangers fought crime, evil, and natural disasters on a cosmic scale, at

the same time the Video Rangers, Solar Guard, and the Space Patrol were fighting similar battles (and a dozen years before *Star Trek's* debut).

Part of the charm of *Rocky Jones* was due to Bobby, a pre-teen, honorary Space Ranger, whose presence seemed to prevent the series from taking itself too seriously—even if the fate of the Earth was at stake.

Bobby received his schooling while

aboard Rocky's ship (at first the "Orbit Jet" and later the "Silver Moon"). Sometimes events would just happen to correspond with what he was reading about—stories such as *The Odyssey* or "Androcles and the Lion." Even the villains seemed to be the products of a young boy's mind: the sexy but wicked "Cleolanta," the misguided villain "Pinto Vortando," and a gang of space pirates ("The Pirates of Prah").

THE GOOD GUYS

Now journey back in time to the 1950s and meet the Space Rangers and their friends:

Rocky Jones (Richard Crane)—A strong and highly principled man, Rocky was as quick with his mind as he was with his fists: the ideal Space Ranger—explorer, soldier, and diplomat. He was a bit chauvinistic, and occasionally said things like, "This is no place for a girl," but that stopped when Vena Ray joined his crew. Although this busiest of Space Rangers had no time for romance, women of all worlds were attracted to him. This sometimes meant trouble for Rocky and his crew (particularly where Cleolanta was concerned). From time to time, Rocky would visit the Space Ranger gym to eliminate some excess weight around the middle (a problem also encountered by other intrepid TV space explorers).

"Winky" (Scotty Beckett)—He could dismantle a spaceship and reassemble it in perfect working order. Winky's love of excitement and adventure was exceeded only by his loyalty to the Space Rangers, and the maintenance of his "little black book" of hot numbers on many planets. He preferred to wear official Space Ranger T-shirts with the sleeves rolled up, suggesting a futuristic Ed Norton. Like Norton, Winky's greatest asset was his big heart.

Biffen Cardoza (James Lydon)—A native of the planet Herculon, Biffen (nicknamed "Biff" by Vena and Bobby) was chosen by Suzerain Juliandra as a Space Ranger "exchange" candidate. Assigned to replace "Winky," Biffen was an excellent student who was also quickly accepted as a member of the crew. A quiet, friendly person, Biffen was also a natural ambassador of interplanetary good will.

Vena Ray (Sally Mansfield)—A translator of alien languages and a licensed space navigator, this young, attractive blonde usually wore caped miniskirts. Rocky initially regarded her as unsuitable for hazardous duty, but soon realized that she was a welcome addition to any crew. Her intuition and compassion saved the day for Rocky and company many times.

Bobby (Robert Lyden)—Professor Newton's ward Bobby was approximately 12 years old when he started traveling in space. Secretary Drake and the Space Rangers unofficially adopted this young genius, and Rocky wouldn't think of going



Sally Mansfield helps Richard Crane hang the "Space Ranger" sign outside Roland Reed Prods.



An enemy rocket ship comes into view on the scanning screen in "Beyond the Curtain of Space."

on most missions without him. An eager explorer, Bobby's knack of fitting into tight places helped to get Rocky and company out of some tight spots.

Professor Newton (Maurice Cass)—Genius and architect/owner of the Newton Observatory, the professor was the Space Rangers' scientific "right arm," with many remarkable inventions to his credit. Newton chose his words very carefully, but he was sometimes, in contrast, impulsive and childlike. Rocky, Vena, Winky, and Bobby were Newton's only "family." His loyalty to the United Worlds was absolute. He did, however, have bad taste in clothes, and tended to dress conservatively.

Professor Mayberry (Reginald Sheffield)—After Professor Newton left Rocky's crew, Professor Mayberry became the Silver Moon's resident scientist. As brilliant as Newton, Mayberry was quieter and less forgetful than his predecessor. He also dressed more stylishly.

Secretary Drake (Charles Meredith)—The tall, impressive and fatherly Secretary General of the Space Rangers (and Secretary of Space Affairs for the United Worlds) was devoted to the Rangers' goals: keeping the peace, exploring space, and furthering the scientific advancement of the United Worlds. Just a little paunchy, Drake was a respected leader who treated Rocky Jones like his favorite son.

Juliandra (Ann Robinson)—The planet Herculon's Suzerain, Juliandra was young, attractive, and wise ruler who embraced democracy, and welcomed the friendship and assistance of the United Worlds. Greatly attracted to Rocky Jones, Juliandra had a fondness for wearing crowns, showing off her shoulders, and smiling a lot. Her twin, Noviandra (now deceased), had similar tastes in clothes, but was Juliandra's opposite in all else.

ROCKY POLITICS

The universe of Rocky Jones was originally a juvenile fantasy patterned after a western view of 1951's political climate. The "United Worlds" and their Space Rangers represented the United States; its principal enemy was the "Ophiucus Formation," a "Red Menace"/bogeyman empire ruled by the evil Queen (or "Suzerain") Cleolanta.

When *Rocky Jones* made its television debut in 1954, the "Cold War" was at its coldest, and to Americans the world seemed divided between "The Forces of Democracy" and "The Enemy." TV series such as *I Led Three Lives* intensified the

paranoia in adult markets, while younger viewers were taught which side they were on by watching such shows as *The Adventures of Superman*, *Captain Video*, *Captain Midnight*, and *Rocky Jones, Space Ranger*. *Rocky Jones* was entertaining, serialized propaganda for the kids of the time. (*Star Trek* later offered a more complex version tailored to an older audience.)

Secretary Drake described the purpose of the United Worlds in the episode "Crash of Moons": "...Each world does its share for the benefit of all. You can help us...and we can help you."

In rejecting membership, Rocky argued in that same story that Cleolanta was "...depriving [her] people of great benefits."

The rulers friendly to the United Worlds were either enlightened royalty (such as Juliandra), or elected heads of state (including Zorovak, ruler of Fornax).

During Rocky's first visit to Jupiter's moon, Fornax (in the episode "Bobby's Comet"), Bobby explained to Zorovak: "The Space Rangers' job is to keep the peace...We don't try to conquer anybody. The laws of the United Worlds of the Solar System give every planet and moon their independence, and the only fighting we do is when someone gets out of line."

The Space Rangers were the "enforcers" of the United Worlds policy, capable of being a "big brother" either in a protective sense, or as defined by George Orwell.

One of the inventions they employed was the "vizeograph," an all-purpose, two-way television with some interesting capabilities. The Headquarters of Space Affairs was protected by the device, which could watch anyone. The vizeograph could also destroy an enemy at the press of a button. (After Vena entered the complex in "Beyond the Curtain of Space," Drake

Continued on next page



Sally Mansfield, Richard Crane and Jimmy Lydon congregate in the cargo room of the Orbit Jet.

Photos courtesy Jan Alan Henderson



Photos courtesy Jan Alan Henderson

Top: After taking control of the Orbit Jet, Argar (Vic Perrin) holds Rocky (Richard Crane) and Professor Newton (Maurice Cass) at raygunpoint in "Forbidden Moon." Above: Series director Hollingsworth Morse (in corduroy jacket at left) discusses some final details with the *Rocky Jones* cast during the shooting of "Forbidden Moon." (Photos courtesy Jan Alan Henderson)

told her that she had been under observation, and could have been destroyed at any time). One could also use it to see and hear through walls, like the "Interocitor" in Universal's 1955 feature *This Island Earth*, and the "Tantalus Field" in the *Star Trek* episode "Mirror, Mirror."

The use of such devices was necessary, considering the foes who were "out there" waiting to pounce on the United Worlds at any sign of weakness. (The vizeograph also helped the Space Rangers present their stories to their audience.)

"This is the curtain which separates our league of planets from the Ophiucius Group," said Secretary Drake in "Beyond the Curtain of Space." "From that point on, they're able to jam our messages. After you've passed that point, you'll be without a communication link."

Perhaps there was also a "Radio Free Ophiucius" organization that broadcast messages to Cleolanta's subjects.

In "Crash of Moons," Rocky and Drake explained that "Ophiucius is ruled by an arrogant woman named Cleolanta. She won't allow her people any information about life on other moons or planets... Even the possession of an astrophone set is punishable by death. We've tried to reason with Cleolanta, but she wouldn't listen to us. She even threatened to kill us if we returned."

In "Beyond the Curtain," Professor Newton and his ward, Bobby, apparently defected to Ophiucius. But the two had really been forced to stay on that planet through a combination of brainwashing and threats. Darganto, Cleolanta's lieutenant, told Newton: "You've been granted extraordinary privilege. Bobby has been near you, and allowed a weekly visit. Proudly I say my own son does not know my face, as Bobby will not long remember yours."

This was clearly an expression of people's fears regarding Communism—that it would turn people into emotionless monsters. The film *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) would later explore this fear in a more extreme form. *This Island Earth* (1957) also featured a kind of thought-control device.

Faking an emergency landing on Ophiucius, Rocky and company were taken to a huge building called "Anakovar de Governox" (translation: "Governor's Headquarters"). "I hope we'll come back out," said Vena. "People have been known not to."

In contrast, Cleolanta was all sweetness and light when she first met Rocky. "You and your friends are free to come and go as you wish," she assured him. "See our country. Look into corners. Search our minds. We have nothing to hide. I only ask for a fair report when you return to Earth." Addressing the Space Ranger formally as "Mr. Jones" (later she would call him "Rocky"), she continued to play the innocent: "Letting the rest of the universe know the truth about Ophiucius is difficult..."



Across top: Left, Sally Mansfield and Richard Crane pose with a futuristic piece of "high-tech hardware" on the *Rocky Jones* set. Center, Patsy Parson, as Cleolanta, brandishes a ray rifle in the *RJSR* episode, "Crash of Moons." Right, Rocky instructs Vena on how to aim a United Planets hand blaster.

People who don't understand us go back with lurid tales, while those who do elect to remain and share our life with us, in happiness, here."

Rocky wasn't fooled.

Eventually, after more deceit and some fisticuffs, Newton and the boy were saved. They recovered from their brainwashing as it gradually wore off during their return to Earth. Bobby, a loyal Space Ranger-in-training, was horrified to learn he had wanted to engage the Orbit Jet in battle while he was under the influence of Cleolanta's treatment.

The Space Rangers and Cleolanta eventually made peace, following the destruction of her planet.

When she first learned that the "Gypsy Moon" Posito would collide with Ophiucus, destroying both, she exclaimed that "It's a plot of the United Worlds. It's a trick to make the Ophiucians a lost race," but with Rocky's help she finally accepted that "It isn't the land, it's the people who make the country."

The last we saw of Cleolanta, she was smiling hopefully at Rocky Jones, anticipating a new beginning for her relocated people, and maybe a few dates with the Space Ranger for herself.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE ROCKY JONES ADVENTURES

The real "Secretary General" who commanded the missions of Rocky Jones was Roland Reed, the show's creator and executive producer.

Roland Reed entered the film industry in 1934 as an extra, became an assistant director, then directed features (including *House of Secrets*, 1936), and edited films.

By 1950, Reed and his associate producer, Guy V. Thayer, Jr., had founded

Roland Reed Productions, with offices at 275 South Beverly Drive in Beverly Hills, California. Their company would shoot television commercials, and later produce filmed television series that they would syndicate through TV distributors.



Assistant producer Arthur Pierson shares some good news with Richard Crane on the *RJSR* set (Fanmail? Ratings? Paycheck? New contract?)

Within two years, they had filmed and were syndicating 78 episodes of *The Stu Erwin Show* (also known as *The Trouble with Father* and *Life With the Erwins*), 39 segments of *Mystery Theatre* (featuring Tom Conway as "Detective Mark Saber" in a series that pre-dated the British-made *Saber of London* with Donald Gray), and the first 26 episodes of *Beulah* (Ethel Waters, the series' original star, was first

succeeded by Hattie McDaniel and, for the rest of the series' 78 episodes, Louise Beavers). These, and Reed's later series, were filmed at the Hal Roach Studios, located at 8872 West Washington Boulevard in Culver City, California.

Working with Reed, Warren Wilson planned the continuity of Rocky Jones. He also wrote many of the series' three-part adventures, including "Beyond the Curtain of Space," "Bobby's Comet," "Rocky's Odyssey," "Crash of Moons," "The Cold Sun," and "The Trial of Rocky Jones." Wilson's single-episode contributions were "Escape into Space," "Kip's Private War," and "Vena and the Darnamo," plus he co-wrote the three-parter, "Blast-Off."

Like most of the people who helped launch *Rocky Jones*, Wilson's roots were in the theatre and films. Born in Boston, Massachusetts on May 11, 1909, Wilson acted on the stage billed as "Warren Burke." He wrote his first screenplay, *Blondie Goes To College*, in 1941 for Columbia Pictures. Wilson's later scripts include *Thanks a Million* (1942), *If You Knew Suzi* (1948) and *Square Dance Katy* (1950).

Reed's production manager was Dick L'Estrange, who had acted in Cecil B. DeMille's 1919 Paramount film *The Squaw Man*. L'Estrange later became one of Mack Sennett's "Keystone Kops" before he directed several silent films. For the rest of his career he worked mostly as an assistant director and assistant production manager.

Most *Rocky Jones* episodes were photographed by Walter Strenge. Originally a newsreel cameraman in New York, Strenge relocated to Hollywood in 1933. He shot features for 19 years before starting his association with Roland Reed, for whom

Continued on next page



Left: Maurice Cass, Dian Fauntelle and a grayer Richard Crane confer with director Hollingsworth Morse on "The Forbidden Moon." Above: Rocky Jones producer Roland Reed with Richard Crane and associate producer Arthur Pierson.

ROCKY JONES *continued*

he also photographed *My Little Margie*, *Waterfront*, and other series. Strenge later returned to feature cinematography, and received an Academy Award nomination for the 1956 20th Century-Fox release, *Stagecoach to Fury*. His last work, for Universal Television, led to five Emmy nominations (in 1961 and 1962 for *Wagon Train* segments, in 1970 and 1971 for *Marcus Welby*, and in 1974 for the TV special *Portrait: A Man Whose Name Was John*). Strenge co-wrote the American Cinematography Manual, and was also president of the

American Society of Cinematographers when he died in 1974.

Roy Luby, the supervising film editor of Rocky Jones, worked on the early 1920's "Mutt and Jeff" animated shorts before directing, photographing, and editing the "Out of the Inkwell" ("Koko the Clown") cartoons for five years beginning in 1926. (He was also "Koko's" associate producer.) Familiar with action/adventure films, Luby also directed westerns, including Monogram's 1940's "Range Busters" films (with Ray Corrigan, John King, and Max Terhune) before assembling the episodes of *Rocky Jones*.

LAUNCHING THE SERIES

In a 1954 *TV Guide* article, Guy V. Thayer, Jr. guessed that there was approximately two million dollars' worth of unsold television pilot films scattered around Hollywood. The original *Rocky Jones* pilot was almost one of them.

Warren Wilson wrote the *Rocky Jones* pilot script in 1951, and Roland Reed selected his cast toward the end of that year, also choosing Abby Berlin to direct Rocky's first adventure. Considering that most of Berlin's experience had been in directing comedies, the choice suggests that Reed originally intended *Rocky Jones* to feature more comedy and less space opera. Not that the series was totally serious, but it could, at least, have been viewed as juvenile adventure with some humor, rather than pure comedy or farce.

A native of New York, Berlin worked in vaudeville as a performer, stage manager, and theatre manager before joining Columbia Pictures in 1934. There, he worked in various departments and edited films. Berlin later produced and directed some of the "Blondie" features, and produced other Columbia films as well. (His wife, actress Iris Meredith, co-starred in three of Columbia's earliest serials, *The Spider's Web*, *Overland with Kit Carson*, and *The Green Archer*.) Berlin produced the pilot of the *Amos 'N Andy* TV series in 1951 at the Hal Roach Studios, where producer Roland Reed also worked. He directed the first 26 episodes of Reed's TV series, *Beulah*, prior to the filming of the *Rocky Jones* pilot.

Director of photography Walter Strenge was selected to shoot the pilot, working with camera operators Wilbur Bradley, and assistant cameraman Keith Smith and Mike Walsh.

In January, 1952, shooting began at Hal Roach Studios, where art director McClure Capps's sets had already been constructed. Production continued throughout March



Ida Moore as Mrs. Pilkington hams it up with other *RJSR* regulars during "Vena and the Darnamo."



Above: An oddly attired Sally Mansfield, an authoritarian Dian Fauntelle and a somewhat befuddled Bobby Lyden in a scene from "The Forbidden Moon." Right: Richard Crane and Sally Mansfield entertain two unidentified twins on the set.



Photos courtesy Jan Alan Henderson

and April, with some location work at a large, local power station, and on the grounds of Griffiths Observatory, in Los Angeles.

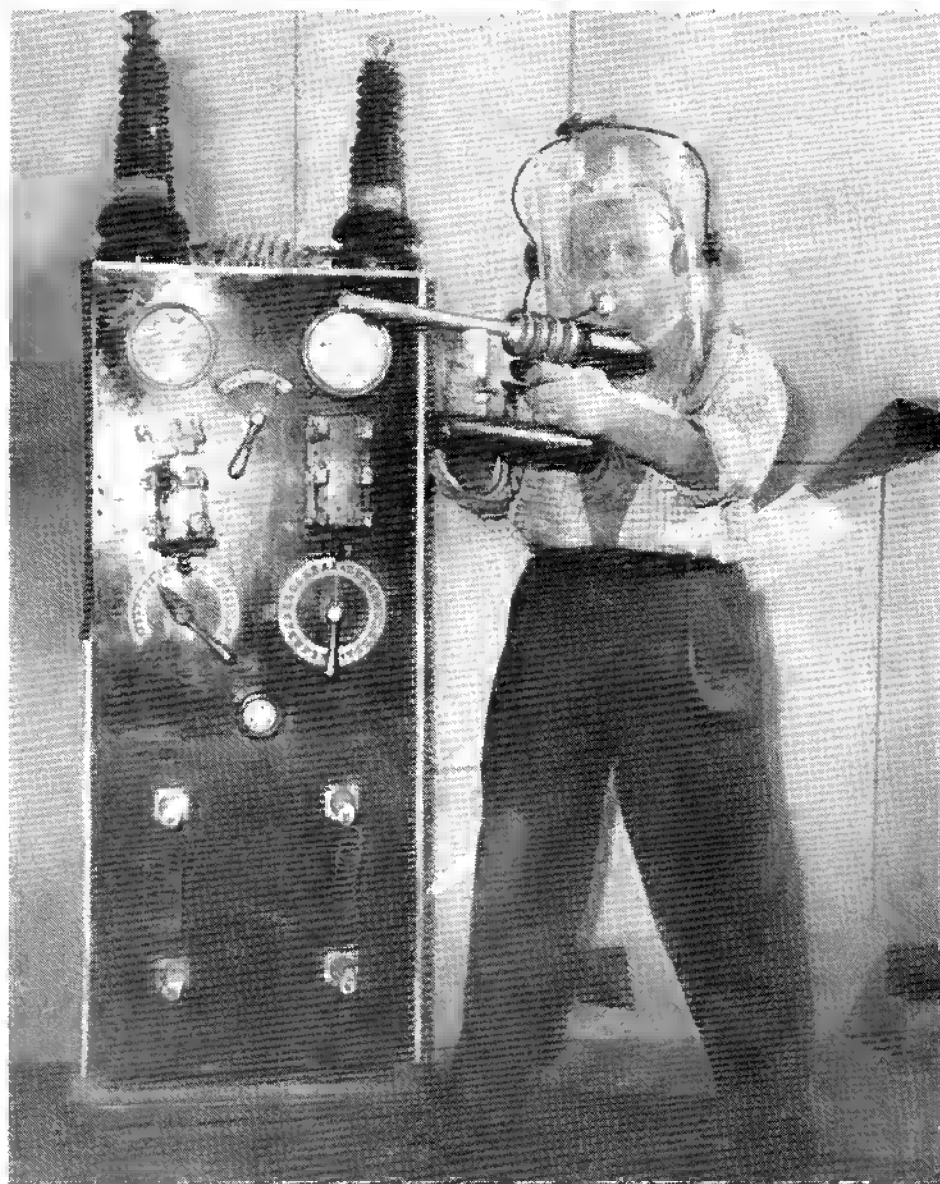
In March, while the pilot was still being shot, a special opticals department was established on the Hal Roach Studios lot to handle the complex *Rocky Jones* effects, as well as titles and effects for other series in production on the lot. Only Jack R. Glass received credit in the episodes. His staff included camera operators Dave Smith and Art Semels, camera assistants Herb Bond, Charles Bohny, Gorman Wiman, and Hugh Wade, and camera loader George LePicard.

Working with other artists, whose names have yet to come to light, they executed the miniature buildings, artwork for starfields, composites for the establishing shots of the Space Rangers' headquarters and rocketport, and miniature spacecraft, and assembled all the effects scenes.

Post-production continued through May, as director Abby Berlin, film editor Fred Maguire, supervising film editor Roy Luby, and producer Roland Reed assembled the footage. Music editor Ted Cain edited a score using stock music. Sound men Charles Althouse and Joel Moss combined the dialogue, music, and special effects to create the final soundtrack. Finally, on June 3, 1952, Roland Reed's "SpaceRangerEnterprises" corporation registered the *Rocky Jones* pilot with the Library of Congress.

But, just how much material was included in this series pilot? Now, *that's* an interesting question, considering that the *original* pilot was never aired, due to the subsequent recasting of "Vena" and "Secretary Drake." The only materials of this original film known to survive are its copyright registration, a promotional brochure, and one 26-minute segment. That

Continued on next page



Assistant producer Arthur Pierson gets into spirit of things with some *RJSR* gear between takes.

film (after retakes and the substitution of a music track composed by Alexander Laszlo), would become chapter one of the three-part adventure, "Bobby's Comet."

In this chapter, Professor Newton, Vena, and Bobby witnessed the crash of a missile shot to Earth from Fornax, a moon of Jupiter. Journeying there, Rocky and company were unaware that Griff, a renegade Space Ranger, also knew about the purpose of their trip, and their destination. Stealing a spaceship, he fled to the planet Ophiucus to tell the wicked Suzerain Cleolanta that the inhabitants of Fornax possessed a source of great destructive power. The Ophiucians decided to journey to Fornax on a mission of conquest, and the film ended as Rocky and his crew landed on Fornax.

The booklet written to promote the pilot described the same segment, synthesizing its plot and referring to it as "a typical Space Ranger adventure." Could this have been the only pilot footage shot? Discussing *Rocky Jones* in the March 12, 1954 issue of *TV Guide*, Roland Reed cited a \$12,000 preliminary projected cost of a half-hour TV pilot, and \$25,000 as the final cost. The higher figure was due to various unexpected and unspecified expenses—perhaps the high cost of necessary retakes, and the resulting need to re-record the film's soundtrack. On the other hand, the surviving pilot footage, although lacking



An alien maudrauder rockets through the inky blackness in "Beyond the Curtain of Space."

a title, is labeled as episode number four of the series. And in that same *TV Guide* article, Guy V. Thayer, Jr. also stated that sponsors were likely to want to see a pilot and a second episode before committing themselves to a series.

It was after the pilot was screened in October, 1952, that Official Films became the first distributor of *Rocky Jones*, and prepared their promotional brochure.

CAST CHANGES

Perhaps the cost of reworking the pilot accounts for the year's wait between the screening of the original footage and the series' television debut. Why were the roles of "Vena" and "Secretary Drake" recast? A better question is why the two original performers, Crystal Reeves and Robert Carson, were ever cast at all.

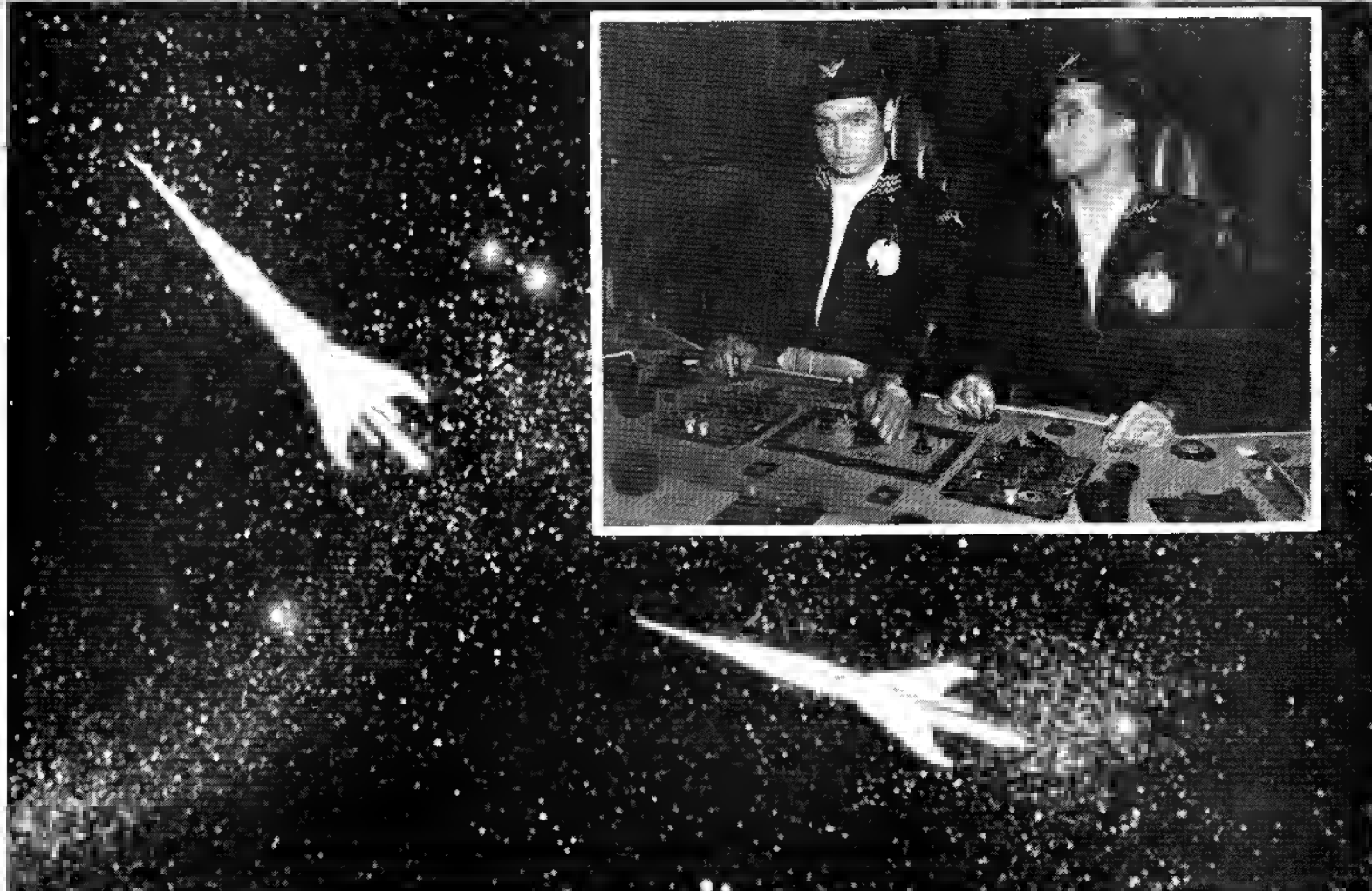
The original "Secretary of Space Affairs," Robert (S.) Carson, was born in 1910. His many film appearances include *Dick Tracy's G-Men* (1939), *The Greatest Show on Earth* (1952), *It Came From Outer Space* (1953) and *The Gnome-Mobile* (1967). On television, Carson can be seen in episodes of *The Adventures of Superman*, *The Addams Family*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, and many other series. Carson died in 1979.

A competent actor with a fine voice, Carson was usually cast as a scientist, office worker, or teacher, although he did portray a ringmaster in *The Greatest Show on Earth*, he was not able to master the role of Secretary Drake and his character lacked strength. Charles Meredith, on the other hand, was perfect for the role of Secretary Drake. A big man with a friendly but authoritative screen presence, Meredith was usually cast as a judge, governor, or business executive.

Crystal Reeves, the first "Vena," appeared in the films *Gallant Journey* (1946), and *Apartment for Peggy* (1948), among Others. She was heard on radio's "Queen



Old and new technologies are contrast in this photo of Rocky and Bobby from "Vena and the Darnamo," montaged over a special effects shot of the Orbit jet landing.



Above: The "Orbit Jet" engages in a deep space dogfight in "Beyond the Curtain of Space." Inset, Rocky and Winky prepare to attack the marauders.

For A Day," and was featured in another Roland Reed TV series, *My Little Margie*. The casting of Crystal Reeves as Vena is itself quite a mystery. She appeared somewhat amateurish in the film, posing rather than standing still, and although she communicated a feeling of urgency, her Vena was not as friendly or natural as the one created by Sally Mansfield. Reeves was taller than Richard Crane, and the high heels, miniskirt and light blouse she wore in the pilot emphasized her height. In contrast, Maurice Cass ("Professor Newton") and Robert Lyden ("Bobby"), the two actors with whom she would have appeared in most scenes, were very short.

THE STORIES

"Rocky's Odyssey" was the Space Ranger's introduction to the Gypsy Moons, Posito and Negato, and their strange inhabitants. We didn't see many people on either moon, but those we saw on Posito seemed appropriately positive in their attitudes, and naive, except for their opinion of Negato's population. The people of Negato were mysterious, and tended to gesture rather than speak. When Rocky went to Negato to make peace, he was caught under the spell of their weapon, "Negato Music," seemingly random notes played on an electronic key board instrument. The sounds (as irritating to the audience as they were supposed to be to



Top to bottom: Tom Brown as Paul Ray (Vena's brother), Scott Becket as Winky, Richard Crane as Rocky, and Sally Mansfield as Vena in an impromptu publicity shot for "The Pirates of Prah."

Rocky) caused him to lose his memory and go berserk until, at Bobby's suggestion, Rocky stopped up his ears just as Odysseus had done to protect himself from the call of the Sirens. Before the departure of Rocky and company, the monarchs of the two moons had become friends.

"Silver Needle in the Sky" (written by Fritz Blocki), concerned an interplanetary peace conference. Held on a space station in "neutral space," the gathering of ambassadors was sabotaged by Cleolanta because nobody had invited her to attend. Before the Space Rangers triumphed over evil, Rocky and the ambassadors barely escaped suffocation.

"Crash of Moons" was the ultimate Rocky Jones disaster story. Before it was over, Posito and Ophiucius were destroyed in a collision, but after a United Worlds spacefleet had successfully rescued the populations of both. An interesting subplot concerned Atlasande (a lieutenant of Cleolanta's) and his wife, Trinka. Atlasande loved his wife, but when he found her using an illegal astrophone to listen to transmissions from passing spaceships, he turned her in to his Suzerain. Trinka was temporarily "put to sleep" in a gas-filled detention room—a punishment later inflicted on Rocky. Fortunately, Atlasande redeemed himself. He awakened Trinka, who awoke Rocky, who saved the Ophiucians.

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In "Blast-Off," Rocky and his crew crash-landed on a planetoid inhabited by primitive "hill people" (naturally at odds with the "Valley people"). A century before, another space traveler had landed on their world, and taught the people his peaceful philosophy. Rescued by his own people, the first visitor was dubbed "The All High" by the primitives, who worshipped him as a god and believed that he would someday return. Enter Rocky Jones, who just happens to look something like a surviving bas-relief likeness of The All High.

Attempting to repair his ship, Rocky introduced the primitives to the wonders of a bellows-heated blacksmith forge, while Bobby taught a big, likeable valley

guy how to play a flute. Rocky also found time to save the life of a valley girl—a "fer sure" hero. But then came the really serious stuff, as restless natives started a landslide that buried the Orbit Jet. How did Rocky escape from the planet? Simple! He and his crew merely repaired the flying saucer-shaped spacecraft left behind by The All High, and flew home.

"The Cold Sun" and "Inferno in Space" were two more episodes that dealt with large-scale disasters. In the first, old Sol started to lose his sparkle, and had to be rekindled by the Space Rangers. In the second, powerful radiations from the planet Cirko found their way to Earth. Their effect was to destroy all wood in their path. The problem was easily solved by building millions of "space mirrors" in

various sizes and reflecting the radiation back to Cirko.

"The Trial of Rocky Jones," the last story filmed, was the series' "economy adventure." The framing device was a visit to Ankapur, an exotic planet with a peculiar legal code. Accused of breaking a law, Rocky was put on trial. His defense consisted of testimonies that used stock footage to show the ruler Rocky's numerous good deeds. Finally, Rocky saved the life of the planet's ruler, LeVolga, and was, understandably, acquitted.

The most bizarre stories in the series were the three single-episode tales, "Escape into Space," "Kip's Private War," and "Vena and the Darnamo." A racketeer made his "Escape into Space" to flee from the law. He intended to buy a moon

Space Ranger Bios: "The Good Guys" United Planets Personnel

*From Rocky to Winky to Little Bobby,
Space Ranger heroes had lives of their own*

Article by JAN ALAN HENDERSON

An integral part of Rocky Jones success as a series was the ingenuity of its stories and colorful cast of characters. "Space Ranger Bios: The Good Guys," presents a detailed look into the lives of the actors and actresses who populated this early video space opera. A full listing of "The Bad Guys" will appear next issue.

RICHARD CRANE

The grim, steel-jawed star of Rocky Jones, Space Ranger was Richard Crane, a veteran of 50 motion pictures and 200 television shows. Crane was born June 6, 1918 in Newcastle, Indiana. Director George Cukor spotted Crane while he was doing stock in Pasadena, California, and arranged a screen test for him. A week later,

Crane landed a role in *Susan and God* starring Fredric March and Joan Crawford. He also appeared in such features as *Bataan*, *A Wing and a Prayer*, *When Johnny Comes Flying Home*, *Eagle Squadron*, *So Proudly We Hail* (with George Reeves) and *Deep Six*. Crane also co-starred in two Abbott and Costello features in 1941, *In the Navy* and *Keep 'Em Flying*.

Dick Crane's face was also familiar to the TV audiences of the 50s. He played an easygoing detective on *Surfside Six*, and he had character roles in *77 Sunset Strip*, *Hawaiian Eye*, *Cheyenne*, and *Maverick*, all done at Warner Brothers.

Crane suffered through the Sam Katzman 1951 serial production of *Mysterious Island*, as cliffhanger fans recall. When viewed today along with Katzman's other work, it was the routine in-house serial that typified Katzman's Columbia work. Filled with balsa-wood guns, leftover uniforms from *Captain Marvel* and *Flash Gordon*, *Mysterious Island* is routine fare at best. Despite the cheapness that reeks throughout its 15 chapters, *Mysterious Island* hosts interesting performances by Richard Crane, Marshall Reed, Terry Frost, and Gene Roth. Crane next starred with David (The Mad Ghoul) Bruce, in the Sam Katzman 1953 Columbia cheese *The Adventures of Captain Kidd*, as Richard Dale, a British Naval Officer assigned to deal with the infamous Captain Kidd. Although they set sail on the high seas in this Columbia chapter play, this Katzman serial is

JAN ALAN HENDERSON is a Los Angeles-based freelance writer, composer, singer and multi-instrumentalist. He also served as a



In his prime, Crane posed for this poolside shot.

probably his cheapest-looking for that studio. For the ocean sky backdrop, a plain white production process screen was used, devoid of clouds, birds or anything else a sailor would see on an ocean voyage.

Crane hammed it up along with Robert Shane in *The Neanderthal Man*, and who can forget his hilarious "Gator" man in *The Alligator People*, starring Beverly Garland and Lon Chaney, Jr. Crane shared the bill with Ed Nelson in Filmgroup's 1962 release *The Devil's Partner*. This '50s trash saga featured cannibal gore, with a variety of desecrations, including drawing symbols in goat's blood and the mutilation of Crane—a predecessor of today's splatter films.

In 1963 Crane again worked for Fox in the film *House of the Damned*. This time he played an architect in the film which included overtones of ghoulishness from the sideshow operators and assorted



Publicity photo of Richard Crane from the '60s.

somewhere, and live in luxury, but his ship was crippled by meteors and he was saved by Rocky and his friends, who were on their way to Fornax. The inhabitants of Fornax were very impressionable, since Rocky's first visit they had begun to play baseball and observe some of Earth's holiday's, including Christmas. (Apparently, Rocky was also an outer space missionary.) During this visit, Bobby taught them all about Halloween. This reminded Rocky of the criminal's superstitious nature, which was used against him to obtain a confession. Not exactly epic story material, but it *did* concern narcotics—the racketeer had dealt in the illegal “tarantula weed”—at a time when most TV shows were prevented from discussing such topics.

In “Kip’s Private War,” the young son of a convicted criminal learned to respect the law by rescuing Rocky and company from one of the universe’s greatest characters, the would-be despot Pinto Vortando.

“Vena and the Darnamo” has this writer’s vote as the strangest *Rocky Jones* story. An explorer gave Rocky something he had found on Mandorra, one of those places in the solar system that people usually stay away from. The object was an umbrella, marked “made in Cincinnati,” and topped with the carved head of a dog. Unable to resist investigating this mystery, the Space Rangers rocketed to Mandorra, where they met the umbrella’s owner—an old woman, the last living descendant of an eccentric scientist who had left Earth with his wife and another

married couple “long ago.” The scientist, regarded as a “crackpot,” was a Jules Verne fan who had built his own rocketship and become one of Earth’s first space travelers. When Rocky left Mandorra, the woman stayed behind because she couldn’t bear to return to Earth and be just another old lady. On Mandorra, the natives considered her a goddess, because she could command the “darnamos” (a contraction of “down, animal”)—the descendants of the dogs brought there from Earth.

Next time, Filmfax continues its coverage of Rocky Jones, Space Ranger with a complete bio-review of its villains, a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the series, information on those rare Rocky Jones collectibles and a full filmography of the series. Don’t miss it!



Crane examines a raygun in *Mysterious Island*.

creepy-crawlies.

Crane’s last screen appearance in a feature film was in 20th Century-Fox’s *Surf Party*. He portrayed Sergeant Wayne Neal in a picture packed with such ‘60s musical favorites as Jackie DeShannon, The Astronauts, and The Routers. Patricia Morrow co-starred. Crane died of a heart attack on March 9, 1969.

SALLY MANSFIELD

Sally Mansfield played Rocky’s Vargas Girl assistant and navigator Vena Ray. Mansfield’s film career basically consists of two features: *Forever Female* (1954) and she is glimpsed briefly at the beginning of Jerry Lewis’ 1961 Paramount picture, *The Errand Boy*. Mansfield entertained the troops during the Korean War and was a contract player for a time at Paramount in the 1950s.

As Vena Ray, Mansfield is first introduced to us in “Beyond the Curtain of Space.” She is very different from her later series self. In “Beyond” she is pushy, bitchy, and conducts a G-rated battle of the sexes with Rocky. She barges her way into Secretary Drake’s office to tell the Space Rangers that Professor Newton and his ward, Bobby, are being held by Cicolanta, Queen of the Planet Ophiuchus. She is sure of this, having been an interpreter on that planet. Toward the end of the three-part episode, she softens her tone and begins making googoo eyes at Rocky (along with most of the female aliens of the series).

SCOTTY BECKETT

Scotty Beckett played Rocky’s first sidekick, Winky. Beckett, born in Oakland, California on October 4, 1929 as Scott Hastings Beckett, made his first film short at the tender age of four and his last, “The Follies,” when he was seven. But, in addition to his role on *Rocky Jones*, Beckett is probably best remembered for his contributions to the “Our Gang” comedies, having appeared in fifteen of those eternal MGM shorts over a period of two years.

Beckett made his feature film debut in a 1933 production called *Gallant Lady*, which starred Clive Brook and Ann Harding. It was on this film that Beckett played



A publicity shot of Scott Beckett as a teenager.

a child at age three, and was succeeded by Dickie Moore, who was the same age, playing a child at age six. Dickie followed Scott into “Our Gang” and was also up for the title role of Tom Corbett in the *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet* TV show. They also appeared together in Marilyn Monroe’s first film, *The Dangerous Years*. Hal Roach thought of Scott Beckett as a replacement for the Jackie Coogan waif-like character from the 1920 tear-jerker *The Kid*, but decided that he would be better teamed with Spanky McFarland in the “Little Rascals” (a.k.a. Our Gang) films of the 1930s. As just about everyone knows, Scotty’s trademarks in the series were an oversized turtle-neck sweater and a baseball hat tilted to the side.

After his departure from *Our Gang*, Beckett won increasingly prominent roles in Hollywood films. Among his major credits are Spencer Tracy’s son in *Dante’s Inferno*, Charge of the Light Brigade, Attorney of the Earth with Fredric March, King’s Row with Robert Cummings, Stand Up and Cheer, Life Begins with Love, Conquest, and The Devil’s Party. He also appeared in *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* with Jon Hall for Universal in 1944, and *The Climax* starring Boris Karloff that same year at Universal. He also played a young Jolson in *The Jolson Story* with Larry Parks.

In the late 1940s, Beckett’s life grew more and more complicated and he became increasingly troubled. In 1948 he was arrested on suspicion of drunk driving. He

Continued on next page



HCPI-1/17-HOLLYWOOD: Although the Hollywood troupe that visited GI’s in Japan and Alaska during the recent holidays can attest to the cold in the faraway armed forces bases, Paramount’s blonde Sally Mansfield can say she was a bit warmer than the rest, at least from the waist up. She wore a sweater that generated its own heat through a padding in the back with a chemical fluid. The only drawback was that she almost froze her legs off while doing her acts in quonset huts and runways because she wore long black stockings. United Press Telephoto/cs

eloped the following year with tennis star Beverley Barker but the marriage dissolved within a mere 60 days. A second marriage produced his only son, Scott, Junior. In 1954, shortly after completing *Rocky Jones*, he ran afoul of the law again, for passing a bad check and carrying a concealed weapon.

On the *Rocky Jones* set, things weren't much better for Beckett. According to series director Hollingsworth Morse, "We were shooting, and the assistant director came to me one morning and says, 'No Scotty today.' I said, 'What's the matter?' and he said, 'I don't know, but he won't be here,' so we had to shoot around him, which was difficult. What had happened was that someone had come into one of those hotel/motels down on Wilshire Boulevard in Westwood, walked in with a big gun, and put it in the night clerk's face, and said 'Give me all your money.' The clerk gave him \$165 and he said 'Duck down behind the counter and stay out of sight.' Well, the man did for five or ten minutes, called the police, and in searching the place later they found Scotty out in one of the cabanas with \$165 dollars on him. They brought him in to the night clerk but the clerk could not identify him. So that was their case right there. They didn't find a gun or anything. These are stories that were told to me—I don't know them to be a fact, but they probably are."

"He got into a big jam down in Mexico," Morse continued. "He went down there, got into a gun battle with the local police, started to escape in his car and ran out of gas."

Beckett, during the remaining years of his life, tried to sell real estate, tried his hand as a car salesman, and twice entered college, intent on becoming a medical doctor. His appearance altered so dramatically he was virtually unrecognizable by 1958.

The final downturn in Scott Beckett's tragically short life came May 8, 1968. He checked himself into a rest home after suffering a serious beating. On May 10, 1968, Beckett was found dead in his room; pills and a suicide note were found. The coroner's verdict was inconclusive. Beckett was 38 years old.

"Scotty had a screw loose," Morse remembered. "He went through a false childhood, and had been working since he was born. I guess he had a lot of fantasies."

MAURICE CASS

Most of the scientists in *Rocky Jones* were Earthmen, the first being Maurice Cass who played the energetic but aging Professor Newton. Cass, born in Lithuania in 1884, appeared in a sound-on-film picture produced by Lee DeForest (pioneering scientist who developed radio and TV tubes) at the Rivoli Theatre in New York in 1923. In 1935 he appeared in *Whispering Smith Speaks* and one year later in *Wife Versus Secretary* with the immortal '30s glamour girl Jean Harlow. *Everybody's Old Man* and *Charlie Chan at the Opera*, with

Boris Karloff, came in 1936. Cass can also be glimpsed in the Frank Capra classic *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. Cass's respectable film career went on to include *Chocolate Soldier*, *Charlie's Aunt* and the remake of the silent classic *Blood and Sand* starring Tyrone Power, all in 1941. His later roles include *Angel on my Shoulder*, with Claude Rains, and he also appeared in *Spook Busters* from Monogram with the Bowery Boys.

As well as portraying Professor Newton in *Rocky Jones*, *Space Ranger*, he was a villain in a 1953 episode of *The Adventures of Superman*, "The Defeat of Superman." Cass played Professor Melvini, the first human



Tom Brown, as Paul Ray, joins Sally Mansfield.

to develop synthetic Kryptonite. His portrayal as the elder educator and grandfather figure to Vena and Bobby in *Rocky Jones* was one of his last roles. Maurice Cass died on June 8, 1954 in Hollywood of a heart attack. *Rocky Jones* had been off the air for only a few months.

CHARLES MEREDITH

Charles Meredith played Secretary Drake, Commander of the Space Rangers, and the perennial father figure in *Rocky Jones*. His rule seemed to be absolute since there was no president or congress or any higher authority figure in the Space Ranger domain. Drake's decisions were final, and he had a firm control over the Space Rangers and Rocky.

Meredith was born in Knotsville, Pennsylvania in 1894. He appeared on screen, stage and television. He made his film debut in 1919 in *Luck in Pawn*. In 1920 Meredith was featured in *Simple Souls*. From 1924 to 1947 there is a gap in Meredith's film career, presumably taken up by stage appearances or the war. He eventually re-emerged in the picture *Daisy Kenyon*. In 1948 Meredith landed a respectable character role in the production of *The Boy With the Green Hair*, and he appeared in *The Miracle of the Bells* with Fred MacMurray and Frank Sinatra. In 1956 Meredith co-starred with Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels in *The Lone Ranger*. His last films were *The Incredible Mr. Limpet* (1964) with Don Knotts, and

Quick Gun (1964). Charles Meredith passed away November 28, 1964, in Los Angeles.

ROBERT LYDEN

Bobby, the juvenile lead in *Rocky Jones*, was played by Robert Lyden. Lyden can also be glimpsed in Universal's 1957 production of *The Man of a Thousand Faces*, the life of Lon Chaney, Sr. He played an adolescent Lon Chaney, Jr., who remarks to Jim Backus (who plays Chaney's manager) that his father has a thousand faces.

Bobby's character on *Rocky Jones* was probably the envy of every kid on the block. Bobby never went to school, but was tutored by Rocky and his cohorts. He had a knack for finding prepubescent alien girls to perfect his "Space Ranger" rap on, also. In most respects, he got more attention from the opposite sex than the girl-crazed Winky. In fact, in an early episode Winky remarks that "Bobby has all the luck with the ladies!" He even got to tell a semi-friendly alien that the "Space Rangers never conquered other worlds," but if one got out of line they'd get their steller butts kicked! This all seemed part of a ploy to attract the kiddie set, and it worked.

TOM BROWN

Veteran character actor Tom Brown played Vena Ray's brother, Paul Ray, in the three-part episode "Pirates of Prah." Brown had appeared in such films as 1924's *Hoosier School Mast* and in the 1938 picture *In Old Chicago*, but it is the 1943 Universal serial *The Adventures of Smilin' Jack* for which he is best remembered. Playing Smilin' Jack in this comic strip wartime adventure, he co-starred with a pre-*Make Room For Daddy* Marjorie Lord, as well as Keye Luke, Philip Ahn, Sidney Toler, Turhan Bey, and Nigel de Brulier (Shazam in Republic's *Adventures of Captain Marvel*). Smilin' Jack was a cut above the usual Universal serial of the time and depicted Brown helping our Chinese allies in the heat of World War II.

Brown also appeared in the Abbott and Costello vehicle *Buck Privates Come Home*, and *The Notorious Mr. Monks* (1958). He made his last film appearance in *The Choppers* (1961).

JIMMY LYDON

On Herculon, Juliandra's first lieutenant was Biffen Cordoza, (nicknamed "Biff" by Vena and Bobby) and was aptly played by the veteran character actor James Lydon. Jimmy, as he was known throughout his career, was born on May 30, 1923 in Herrington Park, New Jersey. He was a child actor on Broadway, and made his film debut in *Back Door to Heaven* (1939) and went on to play the lead in *Tom Brown's School Days* (1940). That same year he made a film called *The Bowery Boy* with William "Whitey" Benedict, sans youthful gang of toughs on the street corner (as there were in the later "Bowery Boys" films); the action revolved mainly around Lydon and Benedict.

Although he did not play the screen's first Henry Aldrich, Lydon inherited the

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The Diva of Dark Drama

Barbara Steele

From Roger Corman to Mario Bava to Federico Fellini, this raven-haired actress has worked with some of the greats

Article by MARK A. MILLER

Several years ago, I temporarily relinquished my sense of propriety to stop by Barbara Steele's Beverly Hills apartment—unannounced and uninvited.

I must confess, however, that I had fancied meeting this talented and captivating actress ever since she had scared me, an innocent fourth grader, to blazes after seeing her in *Black Sunday*. Later, in college, I rediscovered Barbara Steele in my film classes and gained a new respect for her as a fine dramatic actress with her roles in *8 1/2* (1962) and *Young Torless* (1967).

Also a highly successful television producer at Dan Curtis Productions (*The Winds of War* and later *War and Remembrance*), Steele frequently has expressed regret that, as an actress, she is remembered by her most ardent fans more for her low-budget horror films than for what she would consider other, more memorable, non-genre roles.

So, the obvious thought had crossed my mind: How would the legendary Barbara Steele greet a horror film buff (who had also dragged along his poor younger sister for moral support) when he came knocking at her door for an autograph—as Katia, the kind, innocent maiden in *Black Sunday*? Or as her enraged ancestor, Princess Asa, slamming the door in our faces like a tomb?



Director Roger Corman (left) with Barbara Steele and Vincent Price in *The Pit and the Pendulum*.

To my amazement, after my somewhat trepidatious knock, Barbara Steele herself opened the door and stood there, staring at us with those famous green eyes. To this day, I still find it difficult to explain accurately how I felt. Her hair, still beautifully long and black, tumbled timelessly around her shoulders. But instead of wearing a diaphanous flowing nightgown and holding a gothic candlestick (as she was wont to do while roaming through those dank castles in all my favorite films), she was dressed simply in a casual sweater and blue jeans. She smiled pleasantly, with an inquisitive look on her face, and asked, "Yes?"

I explained in nervous, tongue-tied monosyllables that I was a fan from Ohio who'd come for an autograph. I might as well have been wearing a blinking neon sign around my neck flashing: "HICK! HICK!" Had I been Barbara Steele, I think

I would have locked the door and called the police, or at least poured myself a stiff drink. But, instead, she smiled, uttering, "My gosh. Fans?" and motioned us in.

We followed Steele into her living room, gazing at attractive Spanish-style furniture surrounded by countless cardboard boxes. We had obviously interrupted her in a busy weekend of packing to move. If she felt we were imposing on her in any way, she certainly gave a perfect performance in not revealing it.

When she asked us which films of hers we had liked, I blurted out *8 1/2* instead of *Black Sunday*, fearful that she might be offended by my mentioning one of her horror films. She was quite pleased and briefly recited some of her lines from the film, a mini live performance by Barbara Steele. For me, this was, well, incredible!

As Steele pulled a photograph of herself from a pile of papers and began signing it for me, I think she sensed that I was entering the final stages of *star-struck-itis*. (My sister swears that my mouth never ceased

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Above, a recent photograph of Barbara Steele shows her to be as timelessly beautiful as ever.

MARK A. MILLER is an Ohio-based freelance writer and English teacher.

gaping like an open manhole, growing larger by the minute.) Steele began asking me friendly questions about myself, obviously trying to put me at ease with her amenities, but her simple inquiries impressed me as life or death questions on some crazy ultimate final exam.

As we left, I shook her hand, I think to prove to myself that all this had not been a dream. The entire visit seemed like an unreal, fleeting moment, even though we were actually in her apartment for almost fifteen minutes.

Barbara Steele may be a pretty scary lady on the screen, but in real life she is a delightfully personable and understanding woman who, almost thirty years after *Black Sunday*, is still strikingly beautiful, with a physical loveliness matched only by her inner beauty. There is nothing pretentious or artificial about her. And I still remember a homemade ornament hanging on her living room wall, containing these words, the antithesis of her screen image: "I love people."



Above: John Richardson and Arturo Dominici struggle over the Barbara Steele in *Black Sunday*.

Photos courtesy Mark Miller

Scream Queen (skrem kwen) n. [<Goth. with base in Hammer, Bava, Corman> akin to splatter] 1. lovely lady of horror films who exercises her lungs with fretful abandon, occasionally producing awe-inspiring results. 2. [Slang] "Madame Mayhem," as she who produces panicky chills down collective spines in films; she who solicits screams from others 3. Barbara Steele.*

For years, horror film enthusiasts have delighted in trying to verbally define Barbara Steele's arcane beauty and unsettling impact on the viewer. David J. Hogan describes Steele in his book *Dark Romance: Sexuality in the Horror Film*: "...her raven hair, chiseled, sensual features and piercing green eyes... (are) at the core of her appeal... (and) her ability to express a tantalizing sort of evil." In *Scream Queens*,

author Calvin Beck also takes a noteworthy stab: "...with raven tresses framing her bone-china complexion and liquid-green eyes, she is Horror Chic personified."

For many of her most ardent fans, there is an inextricable sinisterness in Steele's face; while this Gothic Goddess' eyes may promise sensual pleasures to the unsuspecting, scorpions lurk behind their dark stare.

Steele began her film career in England in 1958, appearing in bit parts for the Rank Organisation, followed by a two-year contract in Hollywood at Twentieth Century-Fox. This contract provided the young actress with a regular paycheck, but never yielded a single completed film role. (Steele allegedly walked out on her only role at Fox in *Flaming Star*, starring Elvis Presley.) Subsequently, she moved on to Italy, where cinematographer/director Mario Bava cast her in *Black Sunday* (1960), the first and best of ten horror films she would make (all of them in Europe but one), between 1960 and 1966. These films have established Steele as the only Scream Queen who uses her beauty and eroticism against men like a razor-sharp scythe. These films also share the same two limitations: lack of budget and production time. Fortunately, skilled directors and cinematographers, most of whom were from the Caligari-like school of filmmaking, produced films with enough stylish finesse to generate genuine chills.

For *Black Sunday*, his directorial debut, Bava used many low angle shots through twisted tree branches and rolling fog to create an ominous, foreboding mood. A constant monochromatic gloom pervades the film, the separation of lightness and darkness obscured by intervening tones of grey to such an extent that for much of the picture, it is not clear whether it is day



Above: Robert Flemyng hovers ominously behind Barbara Steele in *The Horrible Dr. Hichcock*.

*Taken from *The Filmfax One Definition (Really Abridged) Horror Fictionary*; Unpublished by Imaginary Press, 1989 (late) and a one-shot deal; Edited by... (If you're still reading this, you haven't gotten the joke!)



Photos courtesy David Hogan

Above left: Steele starred with Karloff and Christopher Lee in *The Crimson Cult*. Right: Beautiful Barbara up to no good in *The Pit and the Pendulum*.

or night. This merging of lightness and darkness parallels Steele's dual role as Katia, the virginal young maiden, and Princess Asa, Katia's two hundred-year-old look-alike ancestor who has been rightly condemned by her own brother as a witch and executed. Now, Asa has returned from the crypt to revenge her family. Eventually, Princess Asa becomes Katia by tapping her beauty and strength; good and evil become obscured, just as light and dark have been throughout the film.

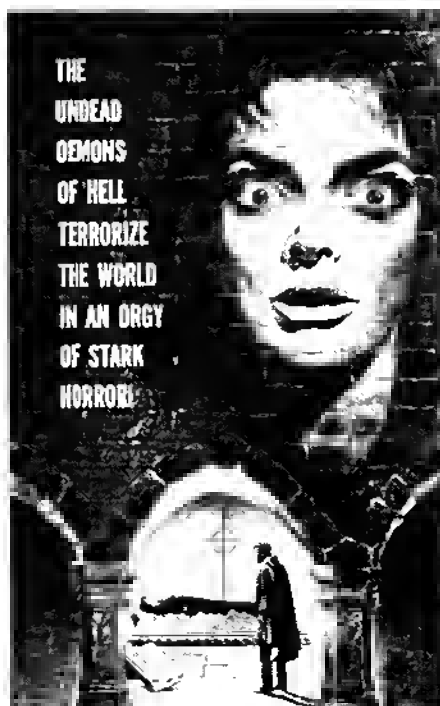
At times Bava's camera moves languidly through the crypt, castle, and stark countryside, eliminating the necessity of many cuts. Quick cutting in key scenes of terror provide contrast. The technique is particularly evident twice; during the unforgettable prologue and during Princess Asa's seduction of Dr. Choma (Andrea Checchi). In the prologue, Steele is executed with a "mask of Satan," a grisly devicelined with iron spikes, which is pounded onto her face with a mallet. The slow buildup to the mask actually being placed over her face is excruciating, shot in such a way that the viewer is likely to squirm as much as the witch-vampire, Asa. The cut to the short-duration shot of the massive hammer hitting its mark is a shocker, an effect similar to a stubborn ketchup bottle finally letting loose. The second sequence, the seduction of Dr. Choma, epitomizes what Steele fans find in her so morbidly fascinating—her direct link of sex to death. Princess Asa, writhing violently in orgasmic throes on top of her crypt, breasts heaving, gulping air down into her lungs for the first time in two hundred years, orders the mesmerized doctor to "Look into my eyes... Embrace me. You will die. But I can bring you pleasures mortals cannot know. Let all your blood course through my veins so that I may live again and you will be one with me." Sex becomes death, and we all need a cigarette.

Steele's success in this film bought her a ticket back to Hollywood to play in Roger Corman's second Vincent Price Poe picture, *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1961). Colorful and made with considerable verve, Corman's film casts Steele in the small but pivotal role as Elizabeth, wife of Nicholas Medina (played to the hilt by Price). With the help of her lover, who pretends to be Nicholas' good friend and doctor, Elizabeth plots to drive Nicholas insane so that she and her lover can split up his property and fortune. In the climax of the film, Steele, bedaubed in blood, pretends to rise from the dead to scare her husband to death. She nearly succeeds as

Price stumbles down some stonc steps to land in a motionless heap. Steele gloats sadistically over Price's corpse, gleefully confessing the entire scheme. In one of Price's finest, most terrifying scenes, those eyes which haven't blinked for such a long time finally move as a twisted grin crosses his face. Steele performs an instantaneous metamorphosis from menacer to menace, meeting up with iron spikes once again, this time in an iron maiden, her terrified eyes seen burning from within.

In her next film, back in Europe, Steele plays a more traditional Scream Queen, the terrified bride of a necrophiliac, Dr. Hitchcock, in *The Horrible Dr. Hitchcock* (1962). Actor Robert Flemyng's Dr. Hitchcock is as cold and clinical as the corpses he desires. And although all of the conventional motifs of this type of picture are present, dating back to *The Cat and the Canary* (1927), with close-ups of slowly turning doorknobs, mysterious locked rooms, secret panels and passageways, and windows suddenly blown open during lightning flashes, this film is distinguished by its unconventional kinkiness in exploring the taboo subject of necrophilia. In fact, director Riccardo Freda sometimes shoots Flemyng caressing the bloodless white cadavers of beautiful women by only showing his hands, suggesting that it is we, the viewers, who may be performing this act. Freda creates an uncomfortable, perverse psychological climate. When one of Flemyng's beautiful patients dies, he later literally licks his lips as he enjoys a whiskey and contemplates a sexual rendezvous in the hospital morgue. He attempts this twice, both times suffering coitus interruptus thanks to a doctor on night duty who happens by. Since Flemyng's reaching hands have become ours as well, this doctor who thwarts Flemyng's endeavors acts as our

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FROM THE PRODUCERS OF "HOUSE OF USHER"
BLACK SUNDAY

Photos courtesy Mark Miller



Top left: The duality of the Barbara Steele persona is captured by the ad art from *Terror Creatures from the Grave*. Bottom left: Steele and George Riviere embrace in a scene from *Castle of Blood*. Above right: Steele is bound to an inverted cross prior to her ritual execution in *Black Sunday*.

BARBARA STEELE *continued*

collective conscience, saving us from being forced to execute something horrible and perverted.

It is fun to see Steele in a role as an innocent, beleaguered victim for a change. She faints a couple times, screams, and generally looks terrified in close-ups. Most of all, she is just beautiful in her vulnerability, indicating that there exists another Steele persona besides the predatory victimizer.

In *The Ghost* (1963), Steele's next picture, director Freda seems to be apologizing for his somewhat placid use of the actress in *The Horrible Dr. Hichcock* and provides her with a meaty role in which

she relishes adultery, greed and murder. This film is quintessential Barbara Steele horror, although her participation allegedly lasted only six days. Once again, she uses her sexual powers uncompromisingly to gain her selfish ends.

The Ghost, set in a coastal mansion in Scotland, 1910, has Steele portraying Margaret Hichcock, the loving, dutiful wife of her invalid husband, Dr. Charles Hichcock. She cradles him in her arms, stops him from committing suicide with his pistol, and even humbles herself by removing his shoes as she prepares him for a night's rest. She is so innocent and dutiful, in fact, that one wonders if this is not really part two of *The Horrible Dr. Hichcock*. Fortunately, in the next sequence,

Steele runs to a nearby garden house for a clandestine meeting with her lover, Dr. John Livingston, who also happens to be Hichcock's physician. Livingston is the only doctor willing to treat Hichcock with his own controversial approach: by using a combination of two deadly poisons followed swiftly by an antidote. Steele demands John kill her husband with the poisons or she will kill him herself. Then she does her physical best to remind him of his prize if he does her bidding.

The murder threat is followed by an incredible sequence of Steele shaving the face of her paralyzed husband, his neck stretched out in close-ups with the shining razor making its imperiling scrapes. For one harrowing, heart-stopping moment



Left: Vincent Price prepares to dispose of Steele in *The Pit and the Pendulum*. Right: Paul Muller tortures Rik Battaglia and Steele in *Nightmare Castle*.



Photos courtesy David Hogan



Photos courtesy Mark Miller

Above: As the duplicitous beauty Elizabeth, Steele drives her husband (Vincent Price) to madness in Roger Corman's *The Pit and the Pendulum*. Top right: An elegantly attired Steele seems out of place in the musty rooms of *The Ghost*. Bottom right: Steele and John Richardson in *Black Sunday*.

the blade stops and presses slightly, straight into the flesh but not quite cutting. The scene is frozen in a fast zoom in/close-up followed by quick cuts to close-ups of Steele's contemplating face and to Hitchcock's morbid look of suspicious unease. This occurs against a backdrop of melancholy, haunting music issuing from a music box and Hitchcock's soft reminiscences of first meeting Steele and falling in love with her as a healthy man. The sequence is poignant, striking a dissonant psychological chord. After Steele's momentary hesitation, she resumes shaving her husband saying disconsolately, "Don't move, darling, or I'll cut you." Steele ultimately leaves the murder to her lover.

By the end of the film Steele is convinced

that John has attempted to leave her, taking all of Hitchcock's riches with him. Her vicious reaction is the single most horrifying sequence of this or any other of Steele's horror films. She relentlessly slashes John with a razor until he collapses semi-conscious to the floor. Throughout this attack, Freda effectively cuts to quick close-ups of Steele's incredibly hateful eyes. As John lies moaning, his face and hands mutilated, Steele drags him down some stairs into a cellar where she douses him in kerosene and burns him alive. Clearly, a lady not to be trifled with.

It seems appropriate that Edgar Allan Poe should finally show up as a character in a Barbara Steele film, Antonio Margheriti's *Castle of Blood* (1964). After all, the

European horror films share the Gothic style, dusty crypts, and various other morbidities that Poe's work has celebrated. *Castle of Blood* begins with a gentlemanly wager. Alan Foster, a journalist, accepts Sir Thomas Blackwood's challenge to spend the night in Blackwood's castle, much against Poe's good advice. This particular night, unfortunately for Alan, is November 2nd, the "Night of the Dead." Steele plays one of the dead spirits, Elisabeth, who instantly falls in love with Alan and hopes to escape with him into the world of the living. On this special night, all of the spirits who have lost their lives in the castle must re-experience their death scenes and also obtain the blood of the

Continued on next page



Left: Steele eyes her bloodied lover, Rik Battaglia, after he is tortured in *Nightmare Castle*. Right: Steele with Margrete Robsahm in *Castle of Blood*.

Left: Lobby card from *Horrible Dr. Hichcock*.

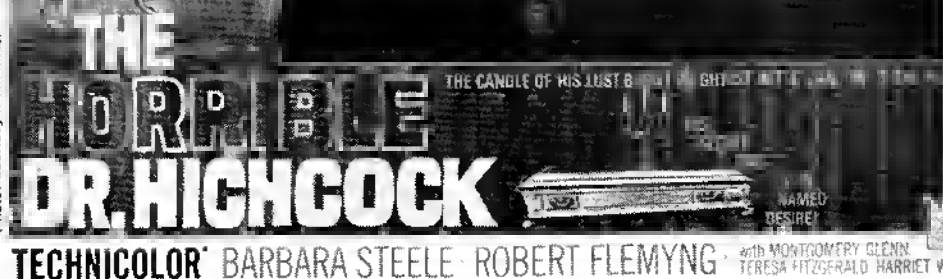
father that their marriage will appease God for the death of her mother. Soon, as Adele has predicted, the horrid plague spreads throughout the kingdom.

Count Humboldt, Kurt, Lizabeth, and others of the castle walk through a raging storm to the chapel to pray for deliverance from the plague. Lizabeth lingers outside the church for a moment at Helen's grave, asking for her help to avenge the death of their mother. The ensuing scene of lightning ripping open the grave, freeing Helen's rotting corpse and restoring itself to its original shapely form, is a stunner. Dripping wet, Steele enters the chapel. When Count Humboldt sees Steele, he drops dead from fear and shock. Kurt, convinced that Steele is dead, and that the resemblance is mere coincidence, is astonished by Steele's alluring, seductive appeal. Steele, assuming the name of Mary, encourages him to commit adultery and then to murder Lizabeth.

At this point, Margheriti begins a dizzying display of frenzied paranoia. After Mary and Kurt poison Lizabeth (and seal her in a tomb to suffocate for good measure), they return her body to her bed to be found dead in the morning. Kurt, however, overhears the maid talking to Lizabeth when she brings in her breakfast. Although Lizabeth is never seen, those who talk to Kurt mention just having seen or talked with her, which understandably, is rather unnerving. The pace quickens as we begin to share Kurt's paranoia. Finally he is trapped by May within a hideous straw effigy that wears a death mask.

The villagers have attached locks of their hair to the huge effigy to symbolize their lack of vanity and their thankfulness to

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BARBARA STEELE *continued*

living to enable them to return next year. This year Alan is the likely blood bank.

Castle of Blood is a moody, melancholy film featuring two memorable sequences with Steele. First, lying in bed with Elisabeth, Alan rests his cheek on her breasts and, slowly, a look of terror invades his face. "My heart isn't beating, Alan," Elisabeth coolly informs him. "It hasn't for ten years. I am dead, Alan, dead." Once again, Steele is the embodiment of sexual desire and death.

The sex/death connection is also apparent later, when Elisabeth's lover, a servant named Herbert, bursts into her bedroom to throttle her husband—another coitus interruptus, in case you are counting. Enter Julie, who apparently also loves Elisabeth. She bludgeons Herbert with the base of an iron candleholder, then lies in bed next to Elisabeth, making advances toward her. Horrified and panicked, Elisabeth reaches for a knife, conveniently lying on the nightstand, and plunges it into Julie. The end result is a feverish triple murder, rendered in a nightmarish symphony of shot selections maximizing the shocks.

Steele's second film for director Margheriti, *The Long Hair of Death* (1964), is as sullen and brooding as its predecessor, *Castle of Blood*. The black and white photography makes splendid use of light and shadow to express the dreadful uncertainty of the medieval plague years, when superstition and an irrational, even maniacal, fear of God ruled the day. Steele plays an angel of vengeance, Helen, in a film whose theme is one of utter revenge.

The film opens with Steele begging Count Humboldt to spare her mother, Adele, from being burned as a witch. Steele knows that Adele is innocent of killing the Count's brother and that the Count's son, Kurt, is

the real murderer. Count Humboldt, however, shows no mercy, going so far as to rape Steele as her mother is burned alive in a straw house. The friar attending to the execution tells Steele's little sister, Lizabeth, that God will save her mother if she is innocent. Before Adele dies, clinging to a cross atop the burning house, she swears that death and pestilence will befall the kingdom for its injustice. Kurt looks on amused as Adele perishes. Soon after, Count Humboldt murders Steele.

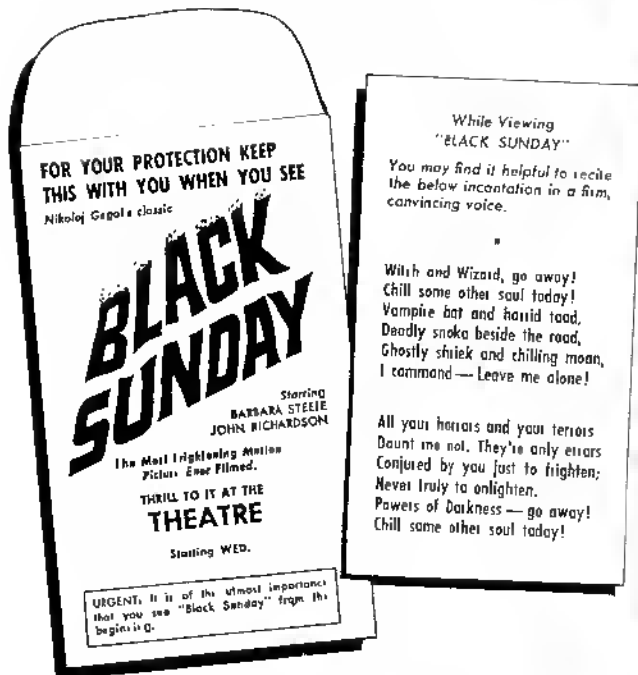
Lizabeth blossoms into a beautiful, elegant young lady, and Kurt lustfully forces her to marry him, using the excuse to his



Above: Steele is featured with Vincent Price on this lobby card from *The Pit and the Pendulum*.

SEAT SELLING SLANTS

1. Place a coffin in front of your theatre, with a microphone inside of the coffin, whereby a person in a strategic point can see the coffin and hold conversations with those persons walking by. This has been used on many occasions and was found to be very effective.
2. Special envelope and insert can be printed up per the sample below, with the correct theatre and playdate information.



3. Special tie-up can be made with the local chain drug stores for a special BLACK SUNDAY sundae. Table tents using the below copy can be distributed to stores:

Take a chance! TRY OUR BLACK SUNDAY SUNDAE — It's a delightful "Witch's brew" inspired by that most shiv-v-v-ery of motion pictures

BLACK SUNDAY

Which starts.....at.....Theatre.

4. BLACK SUNDAY lends itself to special fronts. The Allen Theatre, Cleveland, Ohio used the following front and according to the management drew tremendous comment from foot traffic as well.
5. Black Sunday is perfect for special theatre fronts as evidenced by the photo of the front used at the World Premiere in Cleveland. Be sure to do something extra special with the decoration in your lobby, such as a possible display with a coffin or even a mannequin dressed as a witch being burned at the stake



6. The radio spots on BLACK SUNDAY have received sensational results and can be used over your P.A. system during intermission with one of the sixty second spots being used during each intermission. Use live tag at end of spot. Start this as soon as your date is set. Free spots can be obtained at your local AIP exchange.



LOCAL "GHOUL CONTEST" OUTLINE...with picture

The following is an outline for a story that can be sent to your local newspapers on a "Ghoul Contest" which should be held in conjunction with your playdate for BLACK SUNDAY. This should be given maximum coverage as it has proved itself in various engagements. Contest rules and prizes can be arranged on the local level.

Who are the ten best ghouls in.....?

Answer to this intriguing question will come from the results of a contest to find the unholy ten announced today by American International Pictures in connection with the opening of its newest horror film, "BLACK SUNDAY," on.....at the.....Theatre. Entry will be open to all females between the ages of 18 and 35, with no proof of age required.

Contestants will be judged on the basis of originality and ability to make themselves look as ghoulish as possible, either by natural means or makeup.

The list of appropriate prizes for the ten best ghouls includes a tour of local cemeteries in a chauffeur-driven hearse, a certificate for a withdrawal at the blood bank, a certificate for a down payment on a coffin, and other after-this-world items.

Inspiration for the contest comes from the key scene in American International's "Black Sunday" wherein a lovely young girl is transformed into a ghoul.

According to James H. Nicholson, president, and Samuel Z. Arkoff, executive vice-president, who jointly announced the contest for AIP, "The transformation of Barbara Steele, lovely young leading lady of 'Black Sunday,' into a frightening ghoul creature who is entombed in a coffin got us to thinking that perhaps there are a lot of attractive young girls who would get a vicarious thrill out of entering a contest of this type. In fact, we may be 'scared' into giving her a motion picture contract."

Look for details of the "Black Sunday Ghoul Contest" in your daily newspaper during the next week, just before the opening of the film. (The accompanying photo shows the "Ghoul" winners in Cleveland, Ohio.)

RADIO SPOTS

Specially prepared for saturation scheduling, the radio spots on BLACK SUNDAY are most unique and truly carry all the atmospheric impact of this classic horror. Start lining up the best time availabilities on your local media now, and let your community know that BLACK SUNDAY is on the way.

Complete radio campaign is comprised of 3 -60 sec. spots, 2-30 sec. spots and 1-20 sec. spot. Contact your local American International exchange for your free radio transcription.

TELEVISION TRAILERS

Sensational Television trailers are available for BLACK SUNDAY. This is a must for your campaign and this exciting and unusual material will help you do the job! Be sure to start lining up your television schedule well in advance so as to get the very best availabilities. Contact your local American International exchange for these T.V. trailers.

TEASER TRAILERS

For these theatre men who are looking forward to getting the utmost out of BLACK SUNDAY, it is a must that you take advantage of the terrific teaser trailers that are available. Contact your local American International Pictures exchange for your free teaser trailer. Teaser trailer should be placed on your screen as far in advance as possible.

The Consummate Thespian

WILLIAM BAKEWELL

For over sixty years, from the silents to the talkies, this veteran character actor has lived the Hollywood dream

Article by GEORGE SHELPS

Surveying the pocked pilasters of a 1928 neighborhood movie theatre, William Bakewell, 81, is perhaps recalling his career-making role as Louis XIV in Douglas Fairbanks' *The Iron Mask* (1929). Invited to the Keswick Theatre in suburban Philadelphia to appear as part of a special revival of *Gone With the Wind* (1939), Bakewell no doubt remembers when this battered remnant of an ersatz movie palace was regularly packed for continuous performances of Doug, Sr.'s part-talker and farewell to the silent screen.

Young Billy began hanging around the movie studios in the early '20s. A special experience for him, a Saturday matinee come to life, was to watch Allan Dwan direct Fairbanks in *Robin Hood* (1923), Doug's first monumental costume epic. (*The Iron Mask* would be his last.) A native Californian, Billy was attending Harvard School, a military academy in Los Angeles, where he was president of the drama club. Then 15, he would watch films being shot often on the same day that kids around America were lining up for a ticket to see the carefully-crafted cellophane-silent world of pure cinematic creation that dazzled Billy and set his course for life.

Over 60 years later, these same eyes scan the crackling crowd anticipating *Gone with the Wind*, David O. Selznick's fabled film perennial. The show on the screen is preceded by period carriages bearing suburban "southern belles" escorted by a platoon of Civil War antiquarians dressed in Confederate grey. Present with Bakewell at the screening are Rand Brooks ("Charles Hamilton") and Butterfly McQueen (forever "Prissy"). This is a rare event in film-retarded Philadelphia, whose heritage of Quakerism and snobbery frowns on so sensual and popular a medium.

With the appearance of Thomas Ince's replica of Mount Vernon, 1939's Selznick-International logo, the rising passages of the Max Steiner score stir an infinitely repeatable audience pleasure and affection, as few films ever have. In the lobby Butterfly McQueen sits at a card table, ready to sign autographs. "That's me in there," she pipes, delighted by the echo of



Above: William Bakewell (left) and Douglas Fairbanks in the 1928 silent classic, *The Iron Mask*.

her unchanged voice emanating from the darkened auditorium across a half century of time.

During the screening, Rand Brooks and William Bakewell remain in the upstairs lobby, Brooks holding court with the "Charles Hamilton Irregulars," a splinter of the platoon of Confederates. As Brooks spins anecdotes, Bakewell poses for photographs and reminisces about how he came to have a role in *Gone With the Wind*.

"In 1939, my agent called one day. 'Vic Fleming has got a part for you in *Gone With the Wind*.' Great! Everyone wanted to be in *Gone With the Wind*. I had friends, well-known actors, who'd been on the picture for weeks. I thought, 'Gee! I'll have a long run.' I went out there and I worked for two days! But it was a very dramatic moment in the picture. I'm a lone Confederate horseman who rides down Peachtree Street in Atlanta. Scarlet rushes out and I say, 'Ma'am, you better refugee South, the Yankees are about to take the town' and then I ride on. I thought, 'My God, is that all I have to do?' I was chagrined. Now, look-

ing back on it, it's become such a national landmark, I'm glad to have been a part of it. For everyone in the cast it was as exciting as if we had signed the Declaration of Independence!"

Bakewell was but 31 years old when this bit role in *Gone With the Wind* was filmed in early 1939. He had spent the last fourteen years since his debut in *The Last Edition* (1925) as an adolescent, then younger leading man, with a key appearance in support of William Haines in 1927's *West Point*.

"When I was going to sign the MGM contract for *West Point*, my agent sat me down and said, 'Bring your mother. I want you to have your mother come. I've arranged for her to go with you on location, with the trip and all expenses paid by MGM.' 'How did you ever swing a deal like that?' I said. And he leaned over and said, 'Mr. Haines is rumored to be a homosexual.' There was complete silence, and then my mother asked, 'A homosexual?' She had no idea what it meant!"

Bakewell's genial attitude to this early

GEORGE SHELPS is an Abington, PA film enthusiast, writer and historical theater preservationist.



Above (left to right): Director Norman Taurog, Ray McDonald, Judy Garland and William Bakewell pose for a publicity shot after Judy agrees to be the guest star of a WW2 soldier show in 1942.

revelation of Haines' sexual orientation, which, in the 1930s would drive the actor out of the film business, delineates an attitude toward that business, a gentlemanly boosterism and a detached bemusement towards its darker side that has made it possible for Bakewell to retain, even today, the enthusiasm of a fan. This combination of traits underlies the longevity of his relationships with fellow performers, in friendships enduring for six decades, such as the one which began during *Lilac Time* (1927).

"I was sent over to the wardrobe department at First National," Bakewell explained, "where they were going to make a test for that picture. I was so skinny they couldn't find a uniform to fit me, so they pinned one all up in the back and sent me over to the set. I wasn't about to turn my face away from the camera anyway. The test director told me to lean against the wall, pretend to see a pretty girl, and then motion for her to come over. He shoved this very pretty but skinny girl into the scene and said, 'Now, grab her and kiss her.' Which I did. 'Oh, I'm sorry, Billy,' he said, 'This is Gretchen Young.' A few weeks later she was given the name Loretta Young by Mervyn LeRoy and Colleen Moore. That's when we first became friends and from then on I was almost related to her and her sisters, Polly Ann, Sally Blane, the whole family. They became almost like my own family."

Bakewell indeed tends to feel himself to be part of the Hollywood "family," transcending the industrial and internecine aspects of "show business." He began his rise to prominence as a juvenile lead in Norma Shearer's *The Waning Sex* (1926) and *The Latest from Paris* (1928), peaking quickly with *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930) as Albert Kropp to Lew Ayres' Paul Baumer. He then appeared in the first two-color Technicolor musicals (*On with the Show* and *Show of Shows*, both 1929), two of D. W. Griffith's last efforts, *Battle of the Sexes* (1928) and *Lady of the Pavements* (1929), and the first 70mm films

(*The Bat Whispers* and *Great Meadow*, 1930). He continued with 110 feature films and 300 TV films, including *Davy Crockett*, *King of the Wild Frontier* (as foil to Fess Parker's Crockett in the first episode of the Disney TV trilogy). Bakewell's personality, associations, and accurate, detailed memory uniquely qualify him as a chronicler of the rise and fall of Hollywood. (An excerpt from his upcoming book of mem-

oirs, *Hollywood Be Thy Name*, also appears in this issue of *Filmfax*. [See pages 75-81].)

The relationship among the actors playing the young German recruits in *All Quiet on the Western Front* led to lifelong friendships all around. The film deeply affected the young men appearing in it, most notably the life and convictions of Lew Ayres, with whom Bakewell has maintained a friendship now about to enter its seventh decade.

"Ginger Rogers," Bakewell recalled, "a very dear friend of mine who was once married to my pal, Lew Ayres, asked me to come up to her ranch in Oregon following the break-up of my first marriage to Jennifer Holt. Ginger loved to lecture me and kept asking me why I wanted to marry 'some little actress. She'll only try to compete with you. Why do you do that?' I tried to explain that I didn't go looking for them but, I worked with them, they're attractive and artistic. 'Artistic,' chided Ginger. 'There are lovely girls in music or art classes, and that's where you should set your sights.'"

"When I came back from Oregon, the phone rang, and it was Lew. 'How's Ginger?' he asked. 'Tell me about it tonight. I've enrolled us in an art class.'"

"I guess Ginger was right because there

Continued on next page



Above: War buddies Lew Ayres (left), Ben Alexander (center) and William Bakewell in uniform.

Photos courtesy William Bakewell



Above left: "Albert Kropp" (William Bakewell) and "Paul Baumer" (Lew Ayres) toast a poster girl in Universal's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930). Right: The boys of *All Quiet* pose with director Milestone (center), dialogue director Cukor (kneeling left) and assistant director Nate Watt (right).

WILLIAM BAKEWELL continued

was this beautiful girl there, a student in the class named Diane Griffith, who is now my wife of 35 years and we have two beautiful daughters, Lisa and Mary. And to this day, Ginger says I did exactly what she told me to!"

Ever the guardian of Hollywood's positive heritage, Bakewell was influential in persuading Universal to restore deleted footage for its video reissue of *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

"*All Quiet* has been cut down, butchered, misappropriated and ruined through the years," stated Bakewell. "It is really outrageous. Well, Edie Wasserman, the wife of Lew Wasserman, the head of Universal Studios' parent company MCA, is on the Board of Trustees of the Motion Picture and Television Fund along with me. One day, during one of our meetings, I said to Edie, 'Please tell Lew that he should be ashamed, as head of the studio, to allow one of the greatest Universal classic films to be aborted.' A few weeks later, an article appeared in the *L.A. Times* announcing the restored *All Quiet on the Western Front*."

"Although the quality is excellent," cautioned Bakewell, "the video is slightly shorter than the original print when it had its world premiere at the Carthay Circle theatre in L.A. back on April 21, 1930, but most of the important scenes are intact." (The restored scenes soften the pre-Nazi implications of the cut version, depicting Paul and his comrades as proto-Hitler Youth and their professor a forerunner of Joseph Goebbels.)

In the role of Albert Kropp in *All Quiet*, Bakewell has a scene in which Albert discovers that he has lost his leg in battle. It rivals John Gilbert's similar scene in *The Big Parade* (1925) and Ronald Reagan's in *King's Row* (1942). The "amputation" scene is clear evidence of a capacity for profound expression in the young Bakewell. Yet, his typecasting as a younger lead was hard to escape throughout the Thirties, and just when he developed sufficient maturity to do so, World War II

intervened. He returned to acting in his late 30s only to find a changed and soon-to-decline Hollywood. Bakewell wisely sought a second career to supplement his preferred profession, and while he continued to work in films and television until 1975, his mainstay was, and is today, Beverly Hills real estate.

Additionally, Bakewell has been a member for forty-two years of the Board



STAR ARRIVES FOR 'LADY IN THE DARK' PREMIERE
Top-ranking personalities of the motion picture industry turned out en masse and one of the largest crowds in filmland's history jammed the sidewalks around the Hollywood Paramount Theater as *Lady in the Dark* was given its world premiere showing last night. Star of the musical extravaganza, Ginger Rogers, is shown here arriving for the event, accompanied by Lieut. Billy Bakewell, left, and Leland Howard.

Newspaper clipping caption: "STAR ARRIVES FOR 'LADY IN THE DARK' PREMIER, 2/10/44: Top-ranking personalities of the motion picture industry turned out en masse and one of the largest crowds in filmland's history jammed the sidewalks around the Hollywood Paramount Theater as *Lady in the Dark* was given its world premiere showing last night. Star of the musical extravaganza, Ginger Rogers, is shown here arriving for the event, accompanied by Lieut. Billy Bakewell, left, and Leland Howard." (Newspaper clipping courtesy William Bakewell)

of Trustees of the Motion Picture and Television Fund. The principal institution of this board is the Motion Picture Country House, situated on forty-one acres in the San Fernando Valley. Consisting of fifty-eight cottages for retirees from all arts and crafts of the television and movie industry, it includes a hospital, a lodge for residents needing special care, and a movie theatre screening the latest films. Resi-

dents qualify on the basis of need and are screened anonymously, without reference to industry prominence. Bakewell visits frequently, and had a poignant reunion with a blind Norma Shearer just prior to her death. (The Fund is a charity organization, but it also accepts those willing to pay.)

On one of his many visits to the Country House, Bakewell paused to reflect back on his boyhood idol and eventual close friend, Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. He recalled the day that Fairbanks was required to speak his first lines from the screen, as part of a prologue to *The Iron Mask*, which Bakewell can still recite.

"Out of the shadows of the past./ As from a faded tapestry of time's procession slow and vast,/ I step to bid you bear with me the while your fancy I engage/ to look upon another age."

"I hate to live in the past," commented Bakewell, "but I must say there was something special about those days of the so-called golden era. One had a real sense of belonging. I am the 44th member of the Screen Actors Guild. Today there are 70,441 members. I'm glad I was lucky enough to have been a part of the industry then."

His devotion to the development of the Country House is but another dimension to William Bakewell's true familial concern for the American motion picture, though the era that he witnessed is indeed, like the Old South, "gone with the wind." Yet, while the Old South was, in part, a myth, nevertheless, as there were genuine Cavaliers in Dixie, so, too, may we find them in Hollywood. This is why it seems so appropriate that Bakewell should be attending revivals of *Gone With the Wind*.

It is difficult to become sentimental about the "Get 'em in, Get their money, Get 'em out" ideology that underlies the business of motion pictures. But there are also witnesses to another part of Hollywood, witnesses like William Bakewell, who has survived as a gentleman and charter member of the universal movie family which we all revere.



Photos courtesy William Bakewell

Above left: Sally O'Neil, William Bakewell, Belle Bennett and Jean Hersholt in D. W. Griffith's 1928 silent for United Artists, *The Battle of the Sexes*. Right: Norma Shearer (left), a very young William Bakewell (center) and Sally O'Neil (right) posture in the 1926 M.G.M. silent, *The Waning Sex*.

William Bakewell's Personal Memoirs

"Hollywood Be Thy Name"

The Fairbanks years, at work and play with Doug and Mary

Article by WILLIAM BAKEWELL

It was the heyday of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks—"Mary and Doug." Surely, no major film personalities were ever more idolized than "America's Sweetheart," the little darling with the famous mop of blonde curls, and her smiling, swarthy, athletic husband in that wonderfully unsophisticated age of the silent screen, when hero worship came easily and Hollywood was a magic word. Wherever the two of them went, the world over, they were invariably mobbed by hysterical fans. Doug often had to hoist his bride onto his shoulder to save her from the crush. Unquestionably, they were the King and Queen of the movies.

There was something fabulous about Doug Fairbanks, with his tongue-in-check zest for derring-do, that stirred the adventure yearnings of young and old. Whether he was holding off two dozen of "The Cardinal's Guards" singlehandedly with his rapier, up and down a winding staircase, or leaping from the top of the mainmast and sliding down the billowing sail of a pirates' galleon, with his cutlass slicing through the canvas like a rudder to guide him all the way to the top-deck, or riding through the skies above "ancient Bagdad" astride a white, winged "Pegasus," he always made the impossible seem so easy, so attainable and such fun. His acrobatic grace and swashbuckling style, with everything short of a mischievous wink at the audience as an invitation to join in the action, made youngsters every-



Doug Fairbanks Sr. and Mary Pickford, candid.

where wish that they, too, might be D'Artagnan, or Zorro, or the Black Pirate.

As a schoolboy in Los Angeles, I used to make it a point during every day off to tie myself over to the United Artists Studio whenever I heard that Doug Fairbanks was shooting a picture and peer through the wire fence around the back lot on Formosa Avenue, hoping to catch a glimpse of the incredible star as "Robin Hood," bouncing about on the drawbridge of 'Nottingham Castle,' or as the dusky, pantalooned Thief," striding, chin thrust out and arms swinging, through the Arabian Nights streets of "Bagdad." What boy my age wouldn't have envied me, for suddenly there he was, out there in front

of the camera—Doug himself, in the flesh. That's when I really felt the call, never to be the same again. No question about it—I was definitely going to be a motion picture actor.

So, years later, when I had at last become a working thespian, you can imagine my delight when I learned from my agent one day that I was all set for a great part in a Fairbanks picture—two great parts, in fact: the dual role of the young King Louis XIV and his mad twin brother in what turned out to be Doug's last big silent costume epic following the advent of sound, *The Iron Mask*.

I signed my contract in the office of Doug's brother, Robert Fairbanks, an electrical engineer by profession who had abandoned that calling to take over the business end of Doug's company. Robert was a dark, quiet, kindly man, with a small moustache and a marked family resemblance to his brother, but he was as unassuming and retiring as his colorful brother was outgoing and extroverted. Once I had affixed my signature, Robert shook hands with me and thoughtfully proceeded to give me a few words of fatherly advice, warning me of the pitfalls which lie ahead of every aspiring young actor—primarily the temptations of liquor and women. It was as touching as an army chaplain's interview with a raw recruit.

Day by day, I became acquainted with the various members of the Fairbanks production household. Outside of Tom Mix, Doug was one of the few big stars who prided themselves on doing most of

Continued on next page

This article is excerpted from William Bakewell's soon-to-be-published autobiography, "Hollywood Be Thy Name," (McFarland.)



Above left: William Bakewell (slouching at far left), Lew Ayres (with bleeding nose), Russell Gleason, Louis Wolheim and "Slim" Summerville in a scene from *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Right: Sally O'Neil, Belle Bennett, Jean Hersholt and young "Billy" Bakewell (far right) in *The Battle of the Sexes*.

HOLLYWOOD BE THY NAME *cont'd*

their own stunts, except those so dangerous that the money invested in the picture would be in jeopardy in the event of death or serious injury. Since so many scenes in his films featured action that was highly

acrobatic, requiring perfect timing and coordination for smooth execution, Doug wisely surrounded himself with people who were accustomed to his tricks and style.

First, there was his trainer, blonde, lithe Chuck Lewis, a former Ivy League decath-

lon champion, whose job it was to keep Doug in constant physical trim, as befitted his screen image, particularly when he was actually on a picture. That involved regular daily workouts, including running up and down a sprint path behind the studio dressing rooms, all of which Doug seemed to enjoy tremendously. Chuck was as involved with Doug's athletic exploits as any college track coach might be with a talented team member. And then there was Fred Cavens, the stocky Belgian fencing master who staged all the swordplay so much a part of most Fairbanks productions. Although Fred was highly skilled in the orthodox fencing of the gymnasium, he had a great eye for the broader, flashier techniques more effective dramatically from the viewpoint of the camera. Fred often donned a costume and doubled for the "heavy" in a dueling episode, and whenever there was a reverse-angle close-up of Doug flailing away in mortal combat, it was always Fred's gloved hand which wielded his opponent's off-camera foil.

Other regulars on the roster were the make-up man with the Slavic accent, Bob Stepanoff, and various supporting actors familiar with the Fairbanks pattern, usually cast as henchmen, or assistant "heavies." Chief among these was Charlie Stevens, a most reliable performer who appeared to be of Mexican or Indian blood and was just about Doug's size. He knew Doug's every move and could even double for him if necessary. Charlie was in almost every Fairbanks film, usually playing Doug's servant, groom, or "Man Friday."

Working on a Fairbanks picture was everything I had ever imagined it to be, and then some—a most exhilarating experience for me, especially at that period in my development. In many respects, it was more like play than work, the romance and pageantry of the subject matter being approached by Doug and his staff with a relish and enthusiasm that was infectious.

Preparations [for *The Iron Mask*] were thorough to the hilt. Seldom has Holly-



William Bakewell (on horseback) with Vivien Leigh in David O. Selznick's *Gone With the Wind*.



Photos courtesy William Bakewell

Above left: A young Clark Gable (sans mustache, bending over) manhandles William Bakewell in MGM's 1931 melodrama *Dance, Fools, Dance*. Right: William Bakewell (seated, far right) gets some friendly advice from Ramon Novarro in director Jacques Feyder's 1931 war drama, *Daybreak*.

wood, to this day, seen more magnificent sets and costumes, with no cheating on quality. The great French illustrator and authority on the period and the French court, diminutive, elderly Maurice Leloir, a "Member of the Society of French Artists," was imported to design the costumes and advise on the manners of the Louis XIV period. Leloir and the director, the veteran Allan Dwan, worked closely together and both coached me meticulously on the fine points of comporting myself as the resplendent "Sun King." Also, there were daily fencing lessons under the tutelage of Monsieur Cavens, followed by horseback riding instruction by a wrangler on the back lot, using the heavy, ornately decorated saddle of the times. All in all, it was a field day for a movie-struck juvenile.

Throughout the filming of *The Iron Mask*, a sporadic stream of visitors made its way to the Fairbanks set to watch the shooting. Doug was always a charming and gracious host-guide, going to great lengths to explain every facet of the scene in progress. Usually, especially in the cases of guests of distinction, he would invite them to luncheon in the Pickford-Fairbanks studio bungalow. Often I was asked to join them during my lunch hour. I sat at table one day with the distinguished journalist, Arthur Brisbane, and on another, with a cousin of the King of Spain.

Often, at the end of the day's work, it was customary to go to the studio gym after we had removed our costumes, wigs and make-up, where we would play a game invented by Doug and Chuck Lewis, which was a cross between badminton and tennis. The high net and the scoring were the same as in badminton, but the racquet used was midway in circumference between a badminton and a tennis racquet, while the bird, or shuttlecock, was slightly heavier than in badminton. The players were permitted to dally the bird up into the air with their hands, or even their elbows, before hitting it, so as to get into position for a smash. It was fast

and furious, resulting in a strenuous workout. The game was called "Doug," of course, and was later patented and put on the market, but it never caught on, which puzzled me because it was great fun.

After the "Doug" session, we would usually head for Fairbanks' dressing room



Marlene Dietrich & Bakewell in *Seven Sinners*.

and a steam bath before leaving for the day. The dressing room was located just off the main studio street, and had a small porch outside the door, where Doug's enormous St. Bernard dog, "Robin" (after "Robin Hood," of course), would gaze at us drowsily as we filed past him at the top of the steps. Someone had constructed a

wooden chinrest there for old Robin's jowls and he put it to lazy good use. Doug himself seldom used the steps, preferring characteristically to hurdle his way over the banister when ascending or descending.

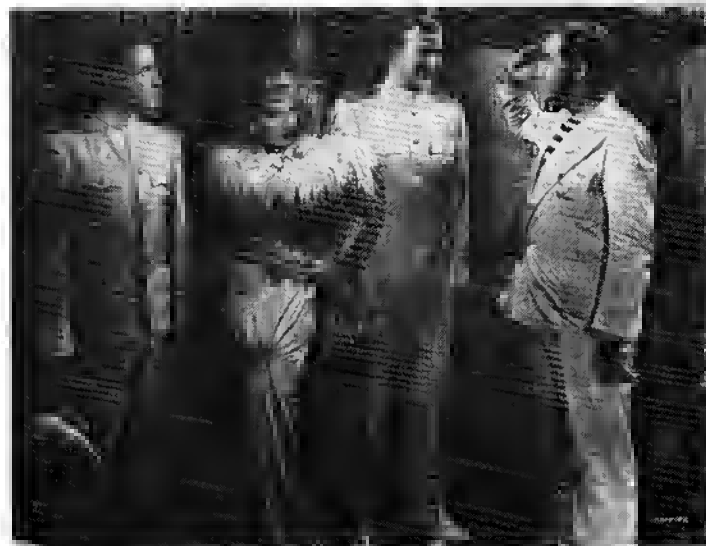
Invariably, some of Fairbanks' cronies would drop around for a visit in his dressing room at the end of the day. Usually on hand were the screenwriter, Tom Geraghty, Charlie Chaplin, theater-owner Sid Grauman, ex-All American footballer Johnny Mack Brown, and the famous Australian athlete, "Snowy" Baker, who taught Doug how to crack the bullwhip for the film *Don Q, Son of Zorro*.

On occasion, Doug would ask me to do my imitation of him for his guests, whereupon I would stride across the room with an exaggerated swagger, stop suddenly and place my right index finger alongside the bridge of my nose as I frowned in mock contemplation. Then I would throw my head back, grin broadly and thrust the finger downward across my chest to indicate a dramatic decision. It was a familiar Fairbanksian mannerism and Doug always got a great kick out of it.

Once Doug had dried off after his steam and a plunge in ice-cold water, he would chat enthusiastically with his friends. I recall watching him lather his chest with soap during one of those bullsessions and proceed to shave it carefully with a straight-edged razor. "This is common practice in the Orient," he remarked as he nimbly stroked away. However it sounds, it was all completely masculine, for Doug's physique was his stock-in-trade and he went all out to keep it in sleek, deeply-tanned, photogenic condition. Although rather small in stature (despite his publicized height of five feet, ten inches, his actual barefoot height was only five nine), he was built like a bronze sculpture and moved with the grace of a matador.

"Pickfair," Mary's and Doug's famous estate in Beverly Hills, was the Buckingham Palace of the motion picture empire, the crossroads of the western world for

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Above left: William Bakewell (in uniform at lower left), Joseph Schildkraut (center, with fencing foil) and Lyade Putti (right) in the 1926 silent comedy/romance, *The Heart Thief*. Right: Bakewell (left), Marlene Dietrich, John Wayne (smiling) and Broderick Crawford (saluting) in *Seven Sinners*.

HOLLYWOOD BE THY NAME *cont'd*

notables from everywhere. No matter how distinguished or dignified a visitor might be, he or she was, more often than not, a movie fan at heart and relished the thought of an invitation to be a guest at Pickfair. Statesmen, writers, composers, artists, athletes, actors and, above all, nobility, were honored on the premises. Doug had a special weakness for royalty. Many sumptuous dinner parties were given for such visiting nobility as Lord and Lady

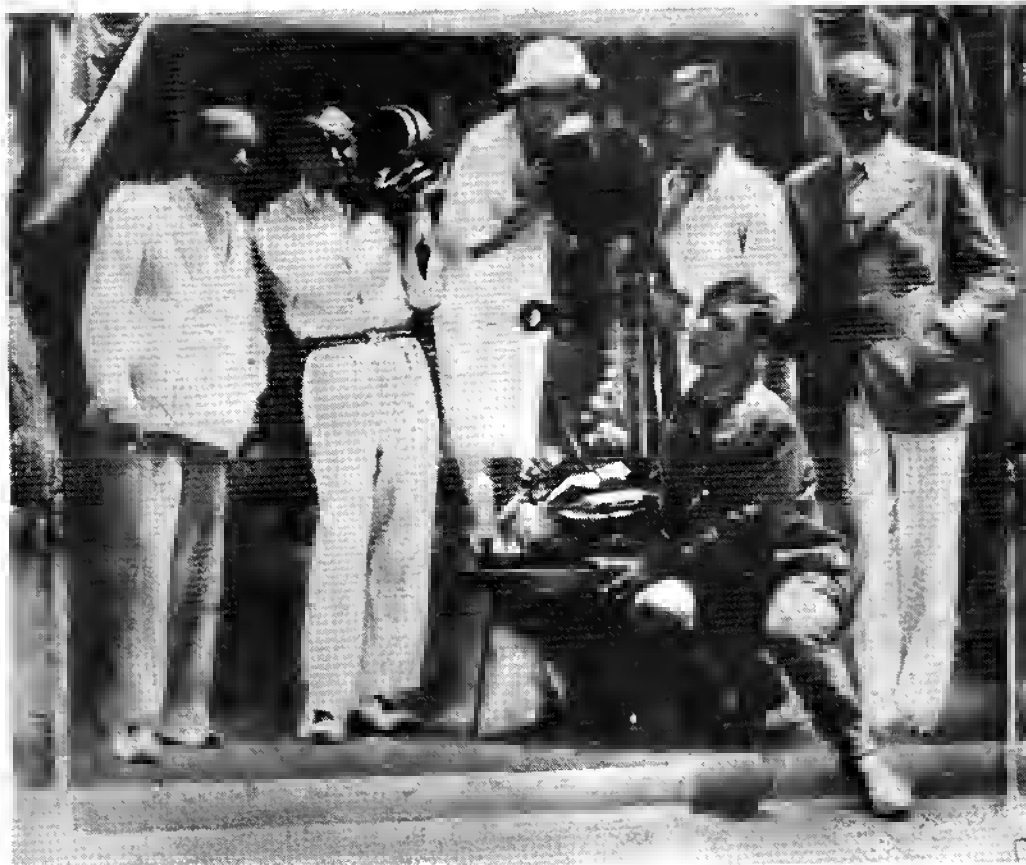
Mountbatten, who spent some of their honeymoon in the Pickfair guesthouse, Lord and Lady Brecknock, the Duchess of Sutherland, the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Kent. The tall, attractive younger brother of the Prince of Wales, on duty as an officer in the Royal Navy, got himself on report when he skipped ship while it was moored off Santa Barbara during a world cruise, just so he could attend a Pickfair function and meet the beautiful Hollywood starlet, June Collyer.

I was fortunate during the years

following *The Iron Mask* to be a fairly regular name on the Fairbanks social roster as a conveniently unattached male—I, a commoner! But, then, on second thought, I had recently held sway as "King Louis XIV," after all.

Speaking of Fairbanks' penchant for royalty and, incidentally, royalty's high regard for Fairbanks, during Mary's and Doug's many travels abroad, they were feted by nobility and presented at court in most of the regal capitals of Europe. Doug once told me a story about the time when he and Mary were to be presented to Alfonso XIII of Spain at the Royal Palace in Madrid. They were thoroughly coached in advance on precisely when to bow, when to curtsy and all the other protocol required for the occasion. At the appointed hour, they arrived at the palace and were ushered into an elegant salon, where they were to await the King's grand entrance. After several minutes of suspense, the door suddenly swung open and in stepped His Royal Highness. Before they could even begin their rituals, the King greeted them warmly and asked, anxiously and in perfect English: "Tell me, what ever happened to Fatty Arbuckle?"

I never really got over my juvenile hero-worship of Douglas Fairbanks. I always felt a tingle of anticipation as I drove through the gates and up the long approach and under the porte-cochere outside the entrance to the big white, green-roofed mansion, which Doug had bought in 1919, when it was in its original state as a hunting lodge. After an attendant had taken my car, I would expectantly climb the stairway which led to the entrance hall, where one of the French butlers, Albert or Rocher, would always be on hand to greet me and take my coat, then usher me into the living room, crowded with famous faces. Albert and Rocher had been fixtures of the Pickfair staff for many years and were indispensable to Mary and Doug in the smooth running of their household. In addition to his other duties, Rocher



Above: This posed publicity shot taken on the Pickfair grounds, featured left to right: Al Jolson, Doug Sr., Mary Pickford, Ronald Colman, Eddie Cantor and Samuel Goldwyn celebrating the opening of a line between Hollywood and British production centers.



Photos courtesy William Bakewell

Above left: Sam Hardy and Betty Compson (both seated at left), Lee Moran, Bakewell (in Usher's uniform), Purnell Pratt (seated at right) and Joe E. Brown (far right) in the 1929 musical, *On with the Show*. Right: Joan Crawford (in dark dress) and Bakewell in the 1927 MGM silent, *West Point*.

personally wrote all the dinner menus in a magnificent baroque longhand.

The film figures present varied from time to time, but the guest list usually included Norma Shearer and Irving Thalberg, Gary Cooper and his then-amour, Countess Dorothy di Frasso, Charles Farrell and Virginia Valli, Fay Wray and Johnny Monk Saunders, the Johnny Mack Browns, Joan Bennett and her fiancée, John Considine, Carmen Pantages (later to become Mrs. John Considine), Gloria Swanson and whichever husband, screen writer Frances Marion, Verna and Sonny Chalif (Verna was Mary's cousin), lovely ingenue Mary Brian (often escorted by me), and various males in the bachelor brigade, like myself, including Joel McCrea, Guinn "Big Boy" Williams, and, yes, Charles "Buddy" Rogers, several years later destined to succeed Doug as the squire of Pickfair.

Of course, Doug's tall, blonde son, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., charming and debonaire, was invariably present. He and I had known each other for some time prior to my *Iron Mask* break, and I welcomed the chance to cultivate our friendship. We really hit it off and he was very helpful. While he was studying his lines for a play, "Young Woodley," shortly to open at the Majestic Theater downtown, he introduced me to the trick of writing the dialogue down on paper from memory when learning a difficult part, so that it would be indelibly imprinted on the mind when the time came for the performance. I used the technique from then on and found it particularly effective if written down just before going to sleep at night. The next morning I would awaken with every word on the tip of my tongue, letter-perfect.

Young Douglas was determined to be his own entity, rather than a carbon copy of his famous, swashbuckling father. In fact, he was currently going through a period in his youthfully impressionable search for a style in which John Barrymore

was his idol, and he patterned his every performance and mode of dress (sardonic glances and long-pointed, low-set Byronic shirt collars) after the "Hamlet" of his day. He was also in the throes of a much-publicized romance at the time with the tempestuous MGM redhead, Joan Crawford, replete with kisses and cuddlings and rather insufferable pet names for each other ("Billie" for her, and "Dodo" for him).

Unfortunately, Doug and Mary were reluctant at first to accept Joan at Pickfair



In one of his more humorous (albeit posed) family snapshots, Fairbanks Sr. concedes the luck of the dice to his friend Maurice Chevalier. Fairbanks later pushed Mr. C in the family pool.

because of her earlier reputation for being a bit on the wild side. But will-power and self-discipline were Crawford's strong points and she made up her mind to re-tailor her personality and prove herself to be every bit as much a lady as Pickford. She would show them. And she did—in fact, she broadened her "A's" and became so veddy, veddy refined that Emily Post herself seemed tacky in comparison. Joan's efforts were successful and she not only won approbation at Pickfair, she became Mrs. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.

Mary and Doug would often have surprise diversions lined up for their guests,

such as on the night they christened their newly-decorated Pickfair interior, furniture and everything done in an all-white motif then in vogue, by running a preview of the new, very first Walt Disney sound cartoon ever, "Steamboat Willie," starring Mickey Mouse, of course. And then there was the party when everybody gathered in the third-floor Oriental room (a converted attic) and had their fortunes told by a noted woman seer of the day, Jean Dennis. Dennis responded to the vibrations of each guest in turn and wound up responding to mine while sitting on my lap after a few champagnes.

I must say that Pickfair parties were anything but drinking bouts. While the mood was always gay and relaxed, the decorum was quite proper and drinks were served only on trays. For some years, there was no bar on the premises, until one day Mary had one put in the basement as a present for Doug (whom she always referred to as "Douglas"). It was a marvelous antique mahogany bar, with a big mirror behind it, and it had formerly graced the interior of a western ghost town saloon before it was carefully dismantled and transported to Beverly Hills. The bar had caught Doug's eye during a recent trip to New Mexico, where he and Johnny Mack Brown had explored the "Billy the Kid" country (Johnny Mack had starred in an MGM film as "The Kid").

The new addition to Pickfair was later christened "The Remington Room" in honor of the Fairbanks collection of western paintings by Frederic Remington which adorned its walls. The room was unveiled with a colorful "wild west" party, Mary quaintly charming in a period dress she had worn in her picture, *Secrets*, Doug wearing his black "Zorro" outfit, and young Doug, Jr., done up as a silk-hatted, roguish "gambler." The others present were proof of a good day's business at the Western Costume Company.

Being a physical fitness addict, Doug

Continued on next page



Above left: James Cagney (standing) and William Bakewell (seated at desk) in a scene from Warner Bros.' 1951 crime drama, *Come Fill the Cup*. Right: Lionel Barrymore (left) and William Bakewell (right) confront each other in Barrymore's den in the 1932 MGM melodrama, *Guilty Hands*.

HOLLYWOOD BE THY NAME cont'd

was all but a tea totaler. The only time I ever saw him slightly under the influence was one evening when he arrived home late for a small sit-down dinner after having won a golf match and joining the boys in a few 19th hole victory toasts in the club locker room. He was sheepish with embarrassment and, after apologizing profusely, he retired to his bedroom to sleep it off.

On summer weekends, Mary and Doug entertained frequently at their attractive beach house, white, with a light blue trim, on the Pacific Coast Highway in Santa Monica. Doug, Jr. and Joan Crawford were usually around the swimming pool, and Robert Fairbanks' lovely daughters, blonde Lucile and brunette Letitia, and Mary's tall, Mona Lisa-faced niece,

Gwynne Pickford, often basked in the noonday sun there. Occasionally, Norma Shearer and husband Irving Thalberg, who had an ocean-front house a few doors away, would drop in for a bit to eat at the evening buffet.

One hot Sunday, Maurice Chevalier and his wife at that time, dark, petite Yvonne, were among the guests. An old Paris friend of the Fairbankses, Chevalier had only recently arrived in Hollywood for his first American picture, *The Love Parade*, at Paramount.

That day comes to mind vividly because of a bizarre incident. The Johnny Mack Browns, Sonny Chalif (husband of Mary Pickford's cousin, Verna), the Chevaliers and I were standing by the edge of the pool chatting idly when Doug emerged from the house, greeted everybody in his ingratiating way and then took Sonny aside

and seemed to whisper something in his ear. Whatever it was, Sonny seemed embarrassed and appeared to protest vigorously, but Doug impatiently egged him on to something. So Sonny swallowed hard and reluctantly proceeded to push the great Chevalier into the pool, clothes, wrist watch and all. It was an incredible sight and we just stood there aghast, our mouths open in disbelief, as Maurice rose to the surface, straw hat dripping water and a grimace of outrage distorting the face destined to become world famous for its *joi de vivre*. Never have I seen an angrier man, and justly so, for it was an ill-advised practical joke, to say the least, and Doug was most chagrined.

As I think of it, some practical jokes have to be viewed in the light of the times, and I regret to say that pushing people into swimming pools with their clothes on was not uncommon in those carefree, pre-Depression days. In any event, Doug quickly realized what an awful deed he had perpetrated and took the full blame away from poor Sonny Chalif, begging Chevalier for forgiveness and arranging for a new wardrobe for his smoldering guest.

Another prank typical of those Hollywood times was an obscene little stunt known as "goosing," which consisted of crudely prodding an unsuspecting bystander in the bulls-eye area of his rear end. If the recipient jumped, or gasped shrilly with surprise on contact, he won the dismal distinction of being "goosey." A Fairbanks set, with its abundance of swords, fencing foils and spears, was, naturally, fertile ground for such bawdy nonsense. In fact, it was famous for it and there were even some "bit" actors who were thought to be kept around simply because they "took it big" when goosed and, thus, contributed to an atmosphere of rollicking, good-natured buffoonery during the long day's work.

In the autumn months following *The Iron Mask*, the USC football team was rid-



Left: An original newspaper ad for Douglas Fairbanks' (above right) final silent film, *The Iron Mask*.



Photos courtesy William Bakewell

Above left: Officer William Bakewell (right) delivers a message to Captain John Wayne in director John Strayer's 1936 adventure, *The Sea Spoilers*. Right: Frontiersman Fess Parker (in his famous coonskin cap) confers with Officer William Bakewell in Walt Disney's 1954 "tele-film," *Davy Crockett*.

ing high on the nation's scoreboards, and Doug, Jr. went through a phase of gridiron fever, along with the rest of us. Southern California being the local favorites, we were all ardent rooters and Trojan players were familiar figures at the studios during their off-campus hours. The upshot was that the two Fairbankses, father and son, conceived the idea of staging a touch-football contest to be played on the studio backlot on a given Saturday morning by two choose-up-sides teams, one led by Senior, and the other by Junior. The idea caught on quickly and everybody got so carried away that Doug, Sr., even bought football uniforms with white jerseys for one side, and red for the other.

The day of "The Big Game" came around and we all reported bright and early for action. I was among those selected by Junior, along with Joel Mc Crea, Russell Gleason and the former USC quarterback, blonde, pudgy Marshall Duffield, among others. Senior's club boasted such blockbusters as former Alabama All-American Johnny Mack Brown, Doug's trainer, Chuck Lewis, and huge actor Guinn "Big Boy" Williams, slightly larger than a water buffalo. The game was more for laughs than skill, except that Johnny Mack ran rampant up and down the field to the point of the ridiculous and our side lost disgracefully. Joel McCrea and I wound up as casualties, heading for an orthopedic doctor with our knees out of joint as a result of smashes through our line by the titanic "Big Boy." What two skinny juveniles like Joel and me were doing on the line, I'll never know. My left knee bothers me on occasion to this day.

During the shooting of *The Iron Mask*, the "talkie" revolution was sweeping the picture business. Jolson was singing "Sonny Boy" at Warner's Hollywood Theater and every new film contained at least one scene in dialogue. The panic was on. So Fairbanks and his staff decided to join up by shooting a prologue to the picture which would open on a huge 17th

century tapestry, featuring the inanimate figures of D'Artagnan and his comrades-in-arms, *The Three Musketeers*, in an "All for one and one for all" pose. Suddenly, after a stirring fanfare of trumpets, D'Artagnan would come to life and leap



Fairbanks Sr. as D'Artagnan in *The Iron Mask*.

forward from out of the tableau toward the camera, whip the air a few times in a flourish with his sword, and proceed to address the audience in lifelike sound. Thus, for the first time ever, millions of Fairbanks fans throughout the world would hear the actual voice of their idol.

Of course, Doug had an excellent stage background and was highly qualified to speak lines. Still, Doug was aware that the

silent screen was a thing of such delicate fantasy and illusion that a voice out of keeping with the public's imaginary concept could prove most disenchanting. The magic spell could easily be broken.

People came from all over the lot to witness what amounted to an historic moment, but few were allowed admittance to the set; the stage was far from sound proof and the slightest evidence of a shoe-squeak, or even the sound of human breathing, would result in a cry of: "CUT!" The techniques of sound were so new that each shooting of the speech was a nerve-wracking for Doug as the later countdown for the first atomic bomb. Finally, after tedious takes and countless glasses of water to lubricate his nerve-dry throat, the mission was accomplished; the film was in the can.

At long last, several weeks later, *The Iron Mask* was ready for its world premiere at the Carthay Circle Theater in Los Angeles, with the full Hollywood glamour format—celebrities, limousines, movie-mad crowds and searchlights playing across the evening sky. Once past the glare and the hullabaloo outside the theater, the audience settled down in its expensive reserved seats, the house lights dimmed to utter darkness and soon, after a stirring fanfare of trumpets, D'Artagnan made his leap from the tapestry and addressed the assemblage in Douglas Fairbanks' swaggering staccato with:

"Out of the shadows of the past,

As from a faded tapestry

Of time's procession, slow and vast,

I step to bid you bear with me

The while your fancy I engage

To look upon another age..."

The crowd listened in a hush as the recitation went on to its conclusion, and the film then reverted to its original form to tell Dumas' romantic story, accompanied by a canned musical score, of course. But the important fact of the evening was that the legendary Douglas Fairbanks, shadowy idol of millions, had spoken.

It was the end of an era....

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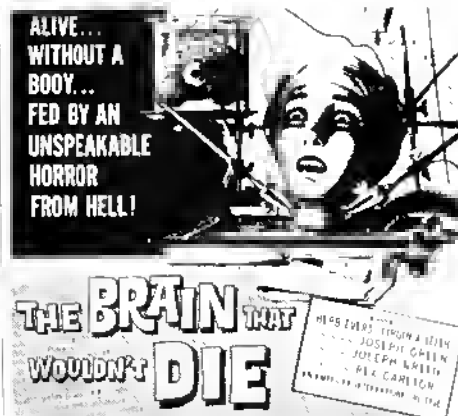
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SCIENCE FICTION

S123 **THE CRAZY RAY** (1923) Henri Rollan, Albert Prajan. An early silent film about an inventor who's mysterious ray makes time stand still. Sci-fi trailers are also included.

S122 **BRAIN THAT WOULDN'T DIE** (1959) Haib (Jason) Evers, Virginia Lath. **TOTALLY UNCUT!** Ludicrous black and white sleazy schlock at its absolute best. Heads, monsters, slippers, mad scientists—all banded together in an unbelievable way. A classic.



S125 **CAPE CANAVERAL MONSTERS** (1960) Scott Peters, Katherine Victor. A pair of aliens blow rocket ships out of the sky with an oversized ray gun near Cape Canaveral. Good time drive-in schlock.

S126 **THOUSAND EYES OF DR. MABUSE** (1960) Peter Van Eyck, Gerta Froba, Wolfgang Preiss. The last film of the great Fritz Lang. An evil genius uses a luxury hotel filled with scientific devices as his headquarters for his evil plans. Well done with a terrific climax!

S127 **THE WAR GAME** (1965) Narrated by Michael Aspel, Peter Graham. A tremendously powerful semi-documentary about a world wide nuclear attack and its affect on a small English town. Brutal and shocking in its depiction of the horrifying aftermath of nuclear war. Not for the squeamish. Highly recommended.

S128 **IT HAPPENED HERE** (1966) Paulina Murray, Sebastian Shaw. Another unusual piece of social science fiction that fantasizes about what would have happened if Germany had conquered England during World War II.

S129 **CHAMPIONS THE INVISIBLE MAN** (1968) Stuart Damon, Alexandra Basteda, William Gaunt. A late episode of the British TV series **CHAMPIONS**. In this episode our heroes battle an invisible man. 50 mins.

HORROR

L001-X **LOST LUGOSI INTERVIEW/WHITE ZOMBIE** (1932) Robert Frazer. This rare interview was filmed as Bela prepared to leave the drug rehab center in 1936. You'll also see **WHITE ZOMBIE** mastered for the first time from a 35mm print.

H122 **THE DEVIL'S COMMANDMENT** (1956 aka **I, VAMPIRE!**) Gianna Canale. A classic Italian horror film about a mad scientist who captures young women and drains their blood to help preserve the woman he loves. Very atmospheric.

H123 **FACE OF THE SCREAMING WEREWOLF** (1958) Lon Chaney. A real gagger, but then worth it to see Lon in his final performance as a werewolf. Makeup and transformations are excellent.

H124 **THE BAT** (1959) Vincent Price, Agnes Moorhead. A mad killer known as 'the bat' is on the prowl in an old gothic mansion filled with terrified people. Great fun as he uses his claw-like hands to rip out jugular veins.

H120 **HORROR HOTEL** (1960) Christopher Lee, Batta St. John. From a beautiful 16mm print! Classic British horror as a witch lures victims into a New England village for blood sacrifices to the devil.

H125 **CURSE OF THE DOLL PEOPLE** (1960) Ramon Gay. A voodoo curse is put on a group of tourists who steal a Haitian devil doll. Probably the best of the K. Gordon Murray Maci-horror.

H126 **THE TELLTALE HEART** (1960) Lawrence Payne, Dermot Walsh. A very unusual and very entertaining adaptation of the classic Poe story. A shy loner discovers the girl he loves in the arms of his best friend. Murder and horror follow in dramatic fashion. Made in England.

H127 **CURSE OF MÖSTADAMUS** (1960) aka **THE BLOOD OF MÖSTADAMUS** German Robles. One of the four feature versions available from a 10-part Mexican serial featuring that south of the border bloodsucker, Nostradamus.

H128 **THE HAND** (1960) Derek Bond, Ray Gooney. In WWII a number of soldiers have hands cut off by the Japanese. Years later in London, an amputation style killer is on the loose, terrorizing the local citizenry.



H129 **DR. BLOOD'S COFFIN** (1960) Kieron Moore, Hazel Court, Ian Hunter. Top notch British horror. In color, too. A mad doctor conducts weird experiments in the caves near a small English village.

H130 **ORLAK, THE HELL OF FRANKENSTEIN** (1961) Joachim Cordero. IN SPANISH WITH NO SUBTITLES. The legendary Frankenstein monster is used for revenge by a notorious body snatcher.

H131 **SAMSON VS. THE VAMPIRE WOMEN** (1961) Santo, Lorena Velasquez. Santo battles voluptuous vampire women led by the gorgeous Lorena V. and her muscle-bound, caped henchmen. Don't miss the hysterical final wrestling scene! A Sinister jewel—so bad it's wonderful!

H133 **TERROR OF THE BLOODHUNTERS** (1962) Robert Clarke, Dorothy Hanay. Jungle hunter as an escaped prisoner faces the terrifying savagery of a ferocious South American Indian tribe.



H134 **SAMSON IN THE WAX MUSEUM** (1963) Santo, Claudio Brook. A mad scientist turns townfolk into monsters, hides them as figures in wax museum. Samson to the wrestling rescue!

H135 **MONSTER OF LONDON CITY** (1964) Marianna Koch, Hansjorg Felmy. German film. While a play about the Jack the Ripper atrocities is enacted at Edgar Allan Poe Theatre in London's Whitechapel district, similar murders are being committed in the city. Tense chiller.

H136 **AUTOPSY OF A GHOST** (1967) Basil Rathbone, John Carradine, Cameron Mitchell. **SPANISH WITH NO SUBTITLES**. Basil Rathbone's last film. This comedy/horror romp has Carradine as Beelzebub, Rathbone as a ghost and Mitchell plays a mad scientist.

H137 **TOWER OF THE SCREAMING VIRGINS** (1971) Terry Torrey, Jean Pail. A totally bizarre French tale featuring Countess Marguerite who after killing of her lovers, brutally disposes of them. "Lita" orgies and nudity in color!

H138 **HORROR RISES FROM THE TOMB** (1972) Paul Haschy, Vic Winner. The cursed descendants of an evil knight return to their ancestral castle to perform atrocities of their own.



JUVENILE SCHLOCK

JS01 **HOT ROD GIRL** (1956) Lorr Nelson, Mark Andrews, Chuck Connors. "Teenage motorists on a speed-crazy rampage". Connors plays a cop who sets up a hot-rod racing program to aid young delinquents. See crack-ups, chicken runs and street dragging.

JS02 **A DANGEROUS AGE** (1957) Ann Pearson, Ben Piazza. An undisciplined girl runs off from boarding school with her lover in hopes of marriage.

JS03 **T-BIRD GANG** (1959) John Brinkley, Tony Miller. "Fast cars, fast girls, and no place to go!" A high school graduate becomes part of a juvenile gang to avenge his dad's murder.

JS05 **NIGHT OF EVIL** (1962) Lisa Gaya, William Campbell. A high school cheerleader gets raped, dumped by her folks, competes for Miss America, unknowingly marries a hoodlum, becomes a stripper and commits armed robbery. Incredible plotline! Juvenile schlock at it's best!

JS04 **GIRL IN LOVERS LANE** (1960) Brett Hestey, Joyce Meadows More J. D. Schlock from Roger Corman. A drifter falls for a girl in a town he's passing through. She ends up dead. Then a doornail and the town is out for Biot's blood.

too young to know... too reckless to care...



A ROBERT HOARK PRODUCTION/A FILMGROUP PRESENTATION

JUNGLE THRILLS

- JS05 **SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO** (1952) Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward, Ava Gardner. Based on the story by Ernest Hemingway, a novelist's search for life's meaning leads him to adventure in the plains of equatorial Africa. Color.
- JS06 **WHITE HUNTRESS** (1955) Susan Stephen, John Bentley. In the 1890's a blonde battles giant python and other enemy natives in the untamed African frontier. Shot in Kenya.

SWORD AND SANDAL

- SS31 **HERCULES** (1959) Steve Reeves, Sylve Kosciene. The granddaddy of Italian musclemen movies catapulted Steve Reeves from Mr. Universe to mythic hero. Based on the Greek tale of Jason and the Argonauts. Fantasy elite. Color best!

The mightiest
adventure
of them all!

GOLIATH AND THE DRAGON



with MARY FOSTER, BRIGIDA CANTO, ELEANORA BANCHI and more in color

- SS32 **HERCULES UNCHAINED** (1959) Steve Reeves, Sylve Kosciene. Sequel to **HERCULES**, the legendary hero's memory is erased by a wicked queen. He battles tigers, a giant, and demolishes a heathen temple. Top notch!
- SS33 **COLOSSUS OF THE ARENA** (1960) aka **DEATH IN THE ARENA** Mark Forest. Colossus/Mecis proves himself as the strongest gladiator in the world by battling foes in the arena.
- SS34 **GOLIATH AND THE DRAGON** (1960) Mark Forest, Brindora Crawford. The big fella battles a giant, a three-headed dog, a wind goddess, a dragon and other nasty creatures to save his wife and kingdom.
- SS35 **HEROD THE GREAT** (1960) Edmund Purdon, Sylvia Lopez. Jealousy of his queen and the threat of his kingdom's invasion cause the King of Judah to slowly go mad. Slight fantasy elements.
- SS36 **MASK OF THE MUSKETEERS** (1960) Gordon Scott, Jose Greco. A traitor to France is intercepted and the princess rescued by masked bandit and three Musketeers.
- SS37 **HERCULES AGAINST MOLOCH** (1963) aka **CONQUEST OF MYCENE** Gordon Scott. Genevieve Grad. Mycene is ruled by the monstrous Moloch who performs human sacrifices. Our hero battles this evil high priest to save the people.
- SS38 **GOLIATH AND THE SINS OF BABYLON** (1963) Mark Forest, Eleanora Banchi. Our hero helps a small kingdom that is forced to make a yearly tribute of 30 young virgins to the Kingdom of Babylon. Adios average sword and sandal!
- SS39 **IN THE YEAR 29 A.D.** (1963) Susan Page, Brad Harris. Not the best year for the people of Pompeii, whose lives are destroyed by the explosion of the volcano Vesuvius.

- SS40 **GIANT OF THE EVIL ISLAND** (1964) Rock Stevens, Dina DeSantis. Sailors of the Seven Seas and inhabitants of port communities are terrorized by a marauding giant. Italian dubbed in English.
- SS41 **LION OF ST. MARK** (1964) Gordon Scott, Rik Battaglia. In the year 1620, the son of Doge battles pirates of the Adriatic and becomes involved with a lovely adventuress.
- SS42 **HERCULES AND THE PRINCESS OF TROY** (1965) Gordon Scott. One of the best sword and sandals you'll ever see. Hercules battles a giant sea monster that sneaks on young virgins. Excellent special effects! Not to be missed!

FORGOTTEN HORRORS

- FH34 **JANE EYRE** (1934) Colin Clive, Virginia Bruce, Beryl Mercer. The classic tale of a governess in an eerie mansion with its mysterious lord. Solid performances in this gothic blend of mystery and romance.



- FH35 **HONG KONG NIGHTS** (1935) Tom Keene, Wora Engols. Criminal agents track gun runners into Hong Kong and criminal infested Macao. A spectacular village burning sequence and suspenseful climax.
- FH36 **HOUSE OF SECRETS** (1936) Leslie Fenton, Muriel Evans. A well made poverty row old dark house thriller with plenty of atmosphere. A young man inherits an estate mansion that is filled with mystery and terror. From 16mm.

SINISTER SERIALS

- SRLS-027 **THE WOLF DOG** (1933) Rin Tin Tin Jr., Frankie Darro. 12 chapters. \$34.95. A boy and German shepherd team up for a thrilling series of adventures on land. See end ad.



- SRLS-028 **MYSTERY MOUNTAIN** (1933) Ken Maynard, Jane Corbin. 12 chapters. \$34.95. Ken battles a masked bandit known as 'The Raptor' whose marauding gang robs and murders railroad crews in the West.

SCTV

- SH11 **SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1954) Ronald Howard. From the British TV series. Volume Four. "Case of the Perfect Husband" and "Case of the Pennsylvania Gun."
- SH12 **SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1954) Ronald Howard. From the British TV series. Volume Five. "Case of Mollot Hubbard" and "Case of the Unlucky Gambler."
- SH13 **SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1954) Ronald Howard. From the British TV series. Volume Six. "Case of the Royal Murderer" and "Case of the Roilcraft Carpenter."
- SH14 **SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1954) Ronald Howard. From the British TV series. Volume Seven. "The Red Headdress League" and "Case of the Vanished Detective."
- TV01 **RACKET SQUAD** (1951) Reed Hadley. Volume One. "Disperate Money" and "Sky High."
- TV02 **RACKET SQUAD** (1951) Reed Hadley. Volume Two. "Miracle in Mind" and "The System."
- TV03 **RACKET SQUAD** (1951) Reed Hadley. Volume Three. "Two Little Country Girls" and "The Smoke Eaters."
- TV04 **RACKET SQUAD** (1951) Reed Hadley. Volume Four. "Take A Little" and "Bill of Sale."
- TV05 **RACKET SQUAD** (1951) Reed Hadley. Volume Five. "Anyone Can Be A Snicker" and "Hoarse Chaser."
- TV06 **CROSSCURRENT** (1956) Gerald Mohr. Volume One. "The Boxing Game" and "First Blush."
- TV07 **CROSSCURRENT** (1956) Gerald Mohr. Volume Two. "Forced Passport" and "Miss Fortune."
- TV08 **CROSSCURRENT** (1956) Gerald Mohr. Volume Three. "Narcotics and Prophecies."
- TV09 **CROSSCURRENT** (1956) Gerald Mohr. Volume Four. "Ransom" and "Star of Ghazah."

- TV10 **DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT** (1952) Brian Donlevy. Volume One. "Blood Stained Feathers" and "Breelcase Story."
- TV11 **DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT** (1952) Brian Donlevy. Volume Two. "Legoon Story" and "Art Tiaasutes."
- TV12 **DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT** (1952) Brian Donlevy. Volume Three. "Venation Story" and "Mine Story."
- TV13 **DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT** (1952) Brian Donlevy. Volume Four. "Havana Microfilm" and "Bhandeira."
- TV14 **DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT** (1952) Brian Donlevy. Volume Five. "The Stolon Letter" and "The Decoy."

EXPLOITATION

- X031 **LASH OF THE PENITENTES** (1937) Josef Swickard. Based on a true story, a newspaper reporter stumbles onto a bizarre religious cult in the American Southwest. The worshipers pain and torture. Ouch!
- X032 **HONKY TONK GIRL** (1937) aka **HIGHWAY HELL** Mary Channing. Another hilarious classic exploitation film in the same vein as "Assassin of Youth" and "Reefer Madness." The story is about a high-kicking prostitution ring. "Going my way, mistar?" Awe inspiring.
- X033 **WASTED LIVES** (1958) Elchika Chouereu. "As boring a picture as the screen will ever get. Shown for the first time on any screen. The birth of twins (old with delicacy and reverence).
- X034 **THE THIRD SEX** (1959) Peule Wesley, Paul Dahlke. One of the first films that deal with homosexuality. Penalties try to "straighten out" their gay son.
- X035 **GIRL ON A CHAIN GANG** (1965) Willem Welson, Julio Ango. Outrageous exploitation film made the year after the civil rights workers were murdered in Mississippi. A white guy, black guy and white girl are arrested, abused and eventually murdered by redneck Southern police.
- X036 **TEENAGE MOTHER** (1966) Arlene Sno Ferdel, Frederick Riccio. Tells all in this nappy exploitation film from the same man who gave us "Girl on a Chain Gang" in glorious Eastman color.

MYSTERY-SUSPENSE-CRIME

- MI39 **THE PEACOCK FAN** (1928) Lucien Prival, Dorothy Dwan. An excellent murder-in-a-lockup room whodunit with a host of suspects and a mysterious, cursed Chinese fan. Silent.
- MI40 **MONTE CARLO NIGHTS** (1934) Mary Brian, John Darrow. A man convicted of murder escapes police to search for the true murderer with only one clue.
- MI41 **MARIE GALLANTE** (1935) Spencer Tracy, Ketti Gallian. Murder and espionage abound in this forgotten Fox film anchored by strong performances from Tracy and Gallian.
- MI42 **'X' MARKS THE SPOT** (1937) Damien O'Flynn, Helen Parish. A private eye investigates a gang of hecking hoodlums.
- MI43 **THE WRONG ROAD** (1937) Lionel Atwill, Richard Crounwell, Helen Mack. \$100,000 is embezzled by two kids! Early Republic mystery/suspense! Hes Atwill sleeping those two JD's toward the right side of the law.
- MI44 **BEHIND PRISON WALLS** (1943) Alan Baxter, Gertrude Michael. A comedy/crime drama from PRC. A scheming tycoon and his jeering son are sent to jail on manage to continue wheeling and dealing from prison. Fun film!
- MI45 **THE DUMMY TALKS** (1943) Jack Warner, Cleo Hulse. When a blackmailing ventriloquist is murdered, a mogul is accused as a dummy to find the person responsible for the crime!
- MI46 **THE MISSING CORPSE** (1945) J. Edward Bromberg, Isabel Randolph. A PRC mystery/comedy. Murder, blackmail, and a disappearing body cause mayhem in a newspaper.
- MI47 **SWAMP FIRE** (1946) Johnny Weissmuller, Buster Crabbe. Virginia Grey. Weissmuller is only non-jungle guy role. He fights gators and soothes the ladies who are scatchin' and hair pullin' each other over him. Torrid climactic swamp lion Crabbe is excellent as the heavy.
- MI48 **INNER SANCTUM** (1948) Lew Landers, Charles Russell. Mary Beth Hqnqhts. A good drama based on the famous radio show. A fortune teller predicts disaster for a young girl on a train.
- MI49 **KILLER BAIT** (1949) Lizabeth Scott, Don Delore, Arthur Kennedy. A women's greed leads her into involvement with nasty gangsters, blackmail and murder!
- MI50 **THE GILDED CAGE** (1955) Alex Nicol, Veronica Hurst, Clifford Evans. A Mona Lisa art exhibit is the scene for a crime tale involving blackmail and murder. A good British thriller.
- MI52 **STRANGE AWAKENING** (1957) Lex Barker, Cecile Melthews. After a man loses his memory, a conniving woman tries to convince him that he's her son in an unscrupulous effort to collect on an inheritance.
- MI53 **SUSPENDED ALIBI** (1957) Patrick Holt, Honni Blackman. When a man visits his mistress, he gets a friend as an alibi. The friend turns up dead and he is accused of his murder. Good crime tale.
- MI54 **DEATH TIDE** (1958) Frank Silvera. A voyage of crime and death. A ship full of diamonds is pilated by hoodlums.
- MI55 **SKI TROOP ATTACK** (1959) Michael Forest, Sheila Carol. Roger Corman. Corman produced, directed, and played a Nazi commander on skis in this war thriller. Just like all of Roger's other horror/sci-fi films except they're fighting Germans instead of monsters.
- MI56 **BLACK AND WHITE AS DAY AND NIGHT** (1963) Brinn Gantz. IN GERMAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES. A man's genius for chess becomes a destructive obsession.
- MI57 **CHARADE** (1964) Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn, Walter Matthau. Hitchcock-like suspense/mystery set in Paris. Grant assists Hepburn after her husband is murdered by sinister crooks searching for a cache of bucks.



Graphics courtesy of Forrest J Ackerman



The Thief of Bagdad—Doug himself—got a time filling the post of director

HOW DOUG MADE



THE Thief and the Princess on the Magic Carpet, flying through the air at 1000 miles an hour. By specially built mechanism, this carpet, suspended by piano wire, was whisked over the set at 25 miles an hour. The camera and the projector create the illusion of infinitely greater speed.

TO SHOW the city hanging from the clouds, the floor of the set was kept polished like a mirror, so that the reflections of the buildings on the floor made them seem to have no foundations. But it was a job to keep up the high polish.



Behind-the-Scenes with

"THE THIEF OF BAGDAD"

From Flying Carpets to Fire-Breathing Dragons,
A Masterpiece of Classical Special Effects, 1920s Style

Article by GARYDON RHODES

The year was 1924, and the silver screen shimmered and sparkled with bright adventure. Swashbuckling Hollywood legend Douglas Fairbanks highlighted the cast of *The Thief of Bagdad*, a wonderful tale of the Arabian Nights. In addition, some of the most dazzling special effects ever seen in a silent film stunned moviegoers in this pre-talkie period.

Before any footage was even shot for the film, twenty-two people did research for eight months. Their goal was to make the special effects as realistic as possible.

84 FILMFAK

Arthur J. Zellner mentioned in his 1924 article "Production Sidelights of *The Thief of Bagdad*," that "Mr. Fairbanks has a penchant for the unusual." A modest understatement in terms of the mystic land of Bagdad which Fairbanks created.

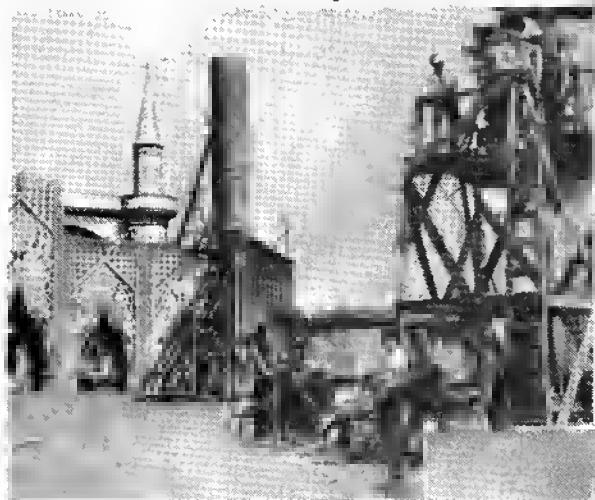
The city of Bagdad started as a concrete floor covering six acres. The concrete was given a heavily-enameled finish, and light was shot on the base lines of the buildings of Bagdad on the cement. With low lighting, shadows became darker as the light source moved up the constructions and

the buildings appeared on film to be hovering in air instead of placed firmly on the ground. To find the proper color and tone which would give the best effect with this method, Fairbanks' staff experimented with 20,000 feet of film.

Zellner also stated in his article that, "It was Mr. Fairbanks' habit to come to the studio bubbling over with enthusiasm about some idea that had occurred to him the night before. However wildly improbable or infeasible it might seem, our staff

Continued on page 88

"The THIEF of BAGDAD"

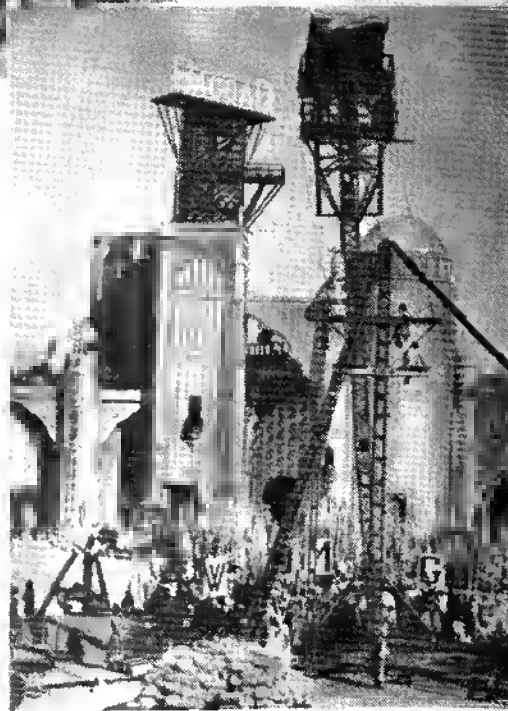


The Princess (Julianne Johnston) gazing into the Magic Crystal

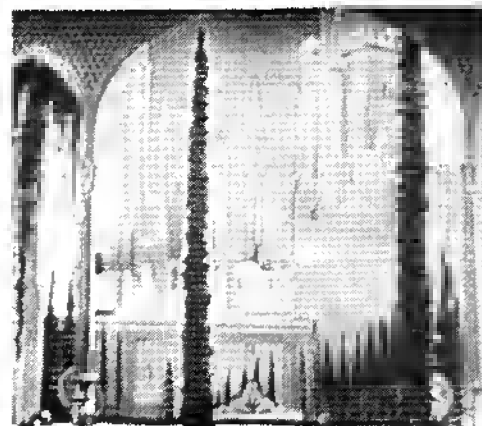
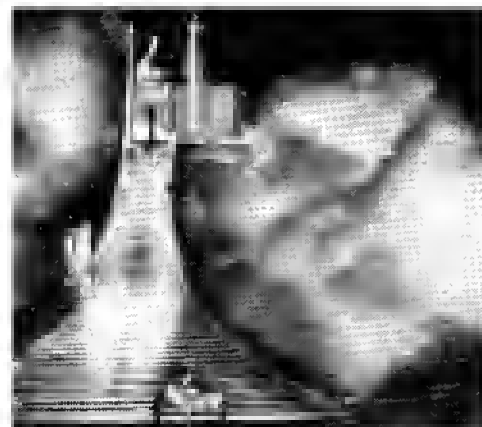
DOUG frequently assumed the director's platform and himself took charge of what was undoubtedly the most cosmopolitan company ever assembled. He gathered dancers from Java, China, Japan and other parts of the Orient, chemists from Europe and bookworms from universities for his research work, character actors from all over the world for his "types", Nubian slaves, Persian magic workers, artists of many countries. And for a year and two months he worked with them, suggesting, instructing, supervising, directing, and playing the star role himself. And he shows the Arabian Nights magic as it never before has been shown on stage or screen.



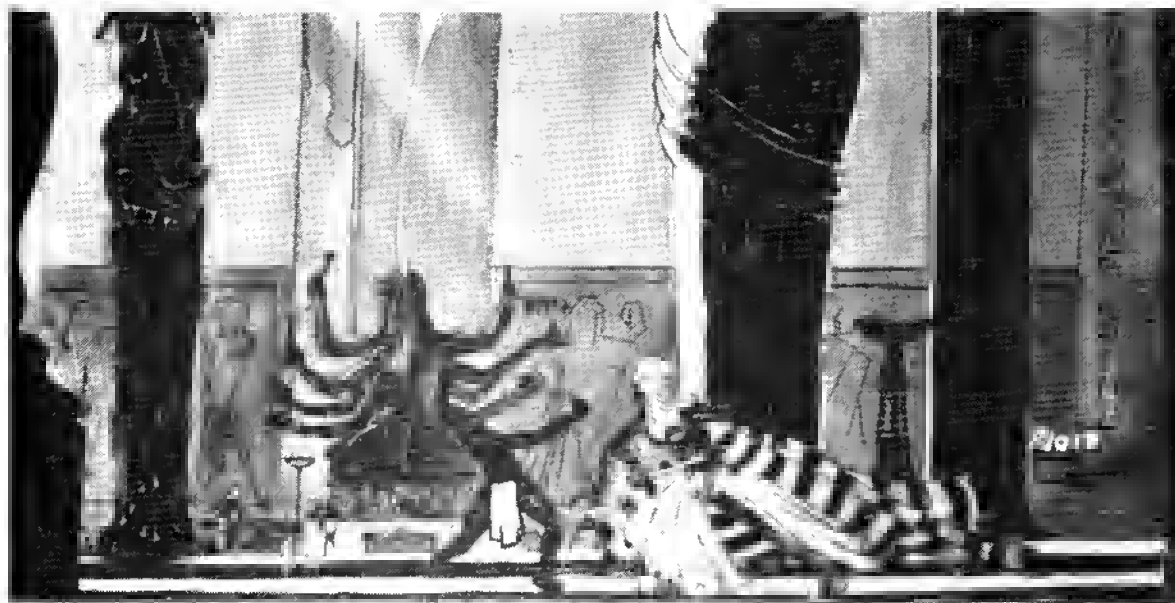
The Thief of Bagdad finds the treasure chest which makes him rich enough to woo the Princess



ON the end of a ninety-foot boom, operated by a derrick and hoist, was built a director's platform which could be swung over any part of the set. The large letters indicate the different companies of the 4000 extras

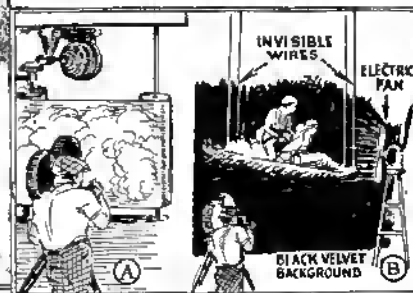


Photos: Opposite page left, top down: William Cameron Menzies preproduction concept for the subsea city. Live actors were superimposed over the miniature of the gigantic six-armed idol. A rare Menzies sketch of an unrealized sequence featuring a giant ogre. Center-spread: Reproduction of magazine pages showing behind-the-scenes and special effects photographs from *The Thief of Bagdad*. This page right, top down: A tiny Fairbanks dismounts his Pegasus to ascend the thousand steps to the Citadel of the Moon. The towering, graceful architecture and exotic gardens of ancient Bagdad, city of wizardry. The Thief a living tree-man in the Enchanted Forest. Bottom left: Menzies' sketch for a battle in the temple.



Mechanical Marvels of

By TAMAR LANE



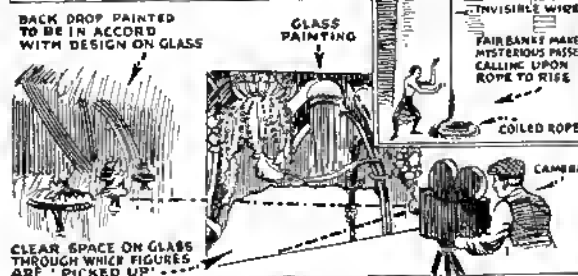
The director said to the engineer, "Let there be a Flying Carpet," and here is the result. The carpet, on a wooden frame, was supported by steel piano wires. It was photographed against a black background and then the film was re-exposed to clouds painted on a rolling easel, as shown at A above. At B is depicted the carpet suspended and the fan furnishing a breeze as it is in flight.



The magic rope—made of a witch's hair, so the caption says—which hangs suspended. Of course, the reel is a piano wire arranged as shown in the sketch at the right. The wire is attached to the center of the rope about two feet from the end. While "Doug" is hanging on the rope which is suspended in the air, seemingly without any support except its own magical powers, he twists the upper end down thus heightening the illusion greatly. The rope is made to rise or fall by saying a magical formula over it.



The Clock of Invisibility plays an important part in the picture. The set is covered with black velvet and the characters, with the exception of their feet, as shown, are covered also and photographed. The cover is then taken off and the set is photographed with the camera in the same position as before without the actors. This second exposure is taken on the same film as that of the first one with the characters' feet showing. Thus it seems to the on-looker that the invisible cloak hides them from view.



In his exploits "Doug" is led into the Kingdoms under the sea. In one case he falls into the most wonderful crystal palace. Above, the view shows, how the scene was made. At the right is shown the scene itself. The scene was painted on a glass plate which was set in front of the camera. The size of the painted plants was so gauged as to appear in proper relation to the characters. The glass was set about four feet in front of the camera and the characters were seen through a clear position.



"The Thief of Bagdad"

OF HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.

high skill in carrying out the solution once it was devised.

Whether it will be noted by a lay audience or not there is no means of ascertaining, but the fact remains that in every case where a solution to the seemingly miraculous feat was obvious, the director was at pains to show by means of some trick of the actors that the obvious solution was impossible, thereby heightening the illusion. One case of this sort is in connection with the magic rope which hangs suspended in the air with nothing except its magical qualities to hold it.

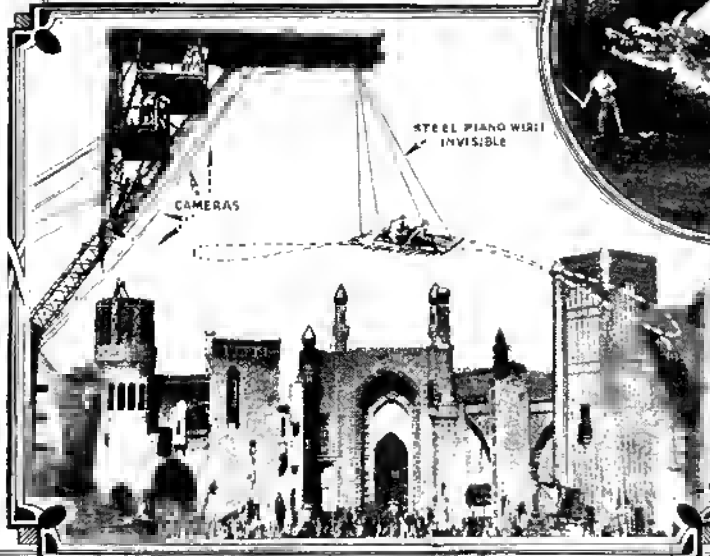
THE on-looker will immediately think—"Ha, it's easy, there's a wire." Immediately he says it, the illusion is gone and the picture loses its effectiveness. But, the mechanical director obliterated his saying it. While "Doug" hangs onto the rope he bends the top of it over, showing that there is no wire attached—or making the audience think that there isn't one—for as a matter of truth there is and a good stout steel one, at that. But little tricks of that type give the picture its perfect finish. Where the mechanics would have been obvious the movie engineers have been careful to hide them. The simplicity of method used in obtaining some extremely gorgeous effects should lead to a lot of credit for the studio staff of designers.



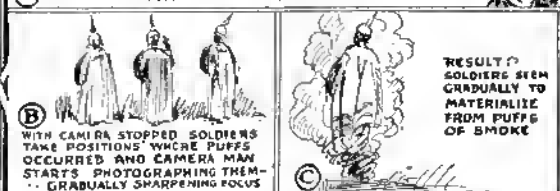
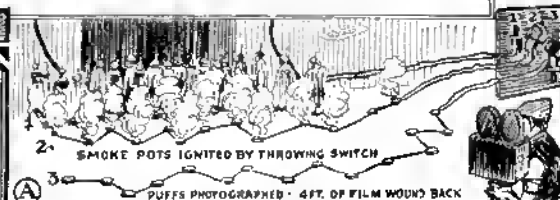
The Flying Horse upon which the Thief rides to the Citadel of the Moon is mystifying, to say the least, until the simplicity with which the scene was made, is explained. The horse and rider were taken against a black background and then the film was rewound and clouds painted on a moving canvas were taken. When developed, a composite view resulted.



There is a terrible monster made by harnessing horns to a crocodile, as shown, and taking an exposure at six feet. "Doug" is then taken on the same film at twenty feet. The distance gives the monstrous size.



The flying carpet comes from a window in the Caliph's castle and circles around over the housetops. This is the way it is made to work: The carpet on a wooden frame is suspended by piano wires from a crane. The camera is placed on the boom and other on adjacent tower. By swinging the carpet and the camera at the same time an effect of a wide wing is obtained—a much wider sweep than actually is made. The black canopy at the top of the crane is merely a sun shade that was manipulated in order to obtain the proper light effect.



A magic chest full of the most wonderful seeds is obtained in the Citadel of the Moon. In fact, with the aid of these seeds one has only to wish and eat a few of them on the ground and behold—in this case it is an army. Each handful of seeds causes a little puff of smoke out of which soldiers materialize. The sleight explains the trick. Electricity sets off the smoke pots. The camera stops and the soldiers step into the smoke. The camera starts again, slightly out of focus. It is brought gradually into sharpness making the soldiers seem to materialize.

© 1924 BY SCIENCE AND INVENTION

THIEF OF BAGDAD FX *continued*

was imbued with the idea that "Somewhere there is a way," and immediately proceeded to find it."

The magic carpet was able to glide through the air thanks to a steel arm which was attached to a rotating foundation. It was constructed so that the carpet could (within the scope of the motion picture camera's lens) relate a ninety-degree arc. This single effect cost over \$78,000.

Fairbanks' foes in the film include a Dragon, a bat and a spider. All three of these adversaries required some ingenious construction, but the spider in particular, made of wood, metal and wire, necessitated no less than eight hundred and forty-six uses of leverage principles to bring the creature to life.

Another wonderment was the Realm of Glass. An artist painted the design for this, and the stalactites and stalagmites were of blown or spun glass. Because the glass was easily broken, a group of professional glass-blowers was brought in and in three months had produced all of the required material.

Fairbanks decided against using well-known actors and actresses in the film, basing his decision on the theory that a familiar star might detract from the char-



Above: William Cameron Menzies' preproduction art for *TTOB*'s "Hermit of the Defile" sequence.

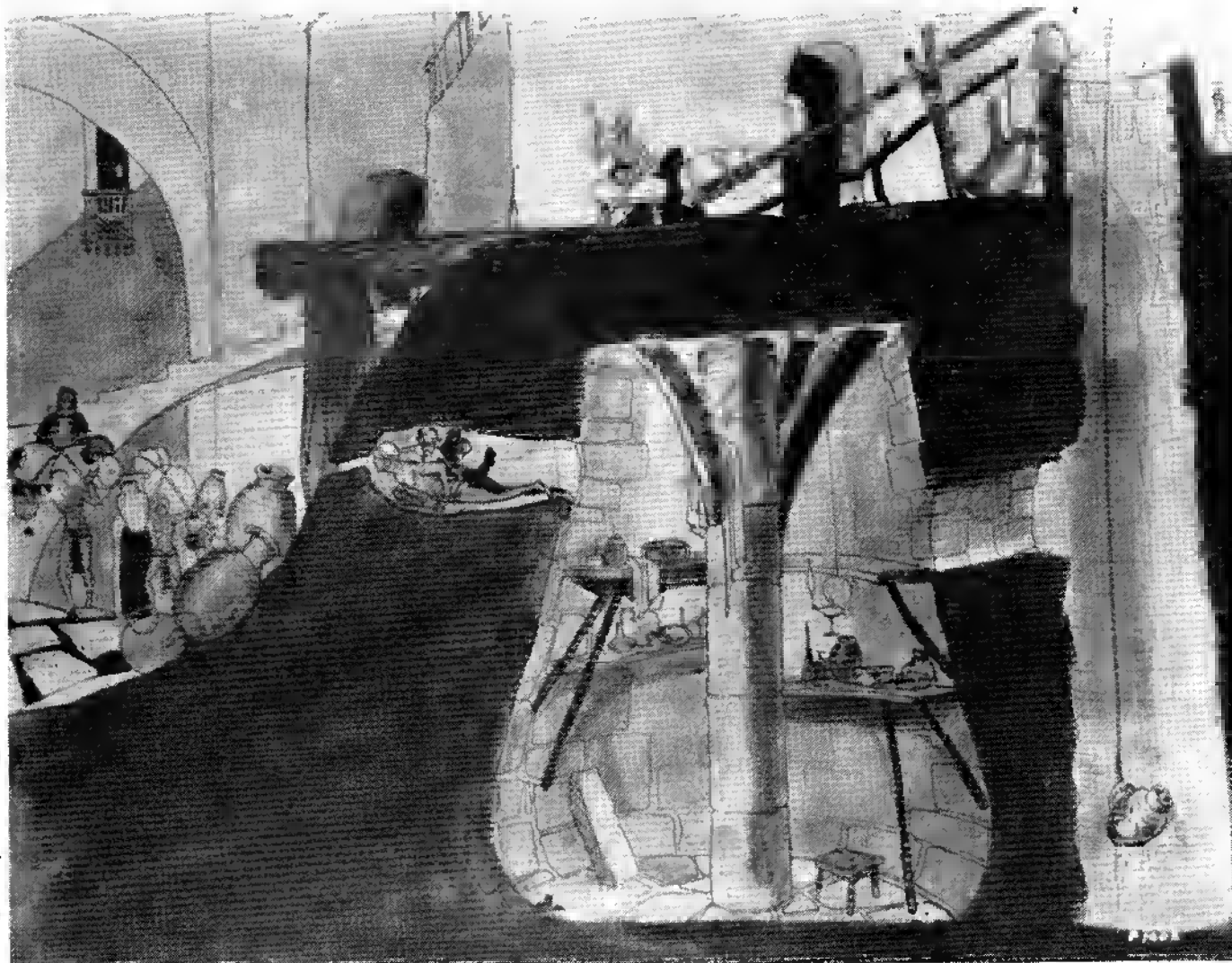
acterizations themselves. A cast representing nineteen nationalities ultimately landed roles.

In a preface to Achmed Abdullah's 1924 novel of the story, Fairbanks stated, "The Thief of Bagdad is the story of the things we dream about: a tale of what happens when we go out from ourselves to conquer Worlds of Fantasy. We set out to win our Heart's Desire; we confuse our enemies; we demean ourselves bravely;

our success is complete; our reward is Happiness. I believe that this is the story of every man's inner self and that every man will thus see it. That's the reason I made *The Thief of Bagdad*."

Today the genius of Douglas Fairbanks' silent spectacles still lives on, maintaining respect even in terms of a movie industry glutted with high tech special effects. ★

See ad on facing page for "Thief" on video.



Above: William Cameron Menzies' detailed preproduction art for the Thief's "well-hidden" hideout in *The Thief of Bagdad*. (Note men at peep-hole.)

VideoOddities Presents

The Fairbanks Film Festival

THE THIEF OF BAGDAD Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. stars in one of the most spectacular adventure epics of the silent era. Directed by Raoul Walsh, this 'Arabian Nights Fantasy' was budgeted at two million dollars, all of which can be seen on the screen, especially in the special effects and the opulent sets designed by William Cameron Menzies. Silent with music score. (1924) 190 min.
Order No: 519 Price: \$69.95

THE IRON MASK Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. produced, wrote and starred in this remarkable tale of romance and royal intrigue. Based on *The Three Musketeers* and *The Man in the Iron Mask*, it was Fairbanks' final silent masterpiece. Directed by Allan Dwan. (1929) 138 min.
Order No: 1125 Price: \$49.95

THE BLACK PIRATE Produced, written and starring Douglas Fairbanks, *The Black Pirate* remains one of the most authentic and enjoyable of all sea-going epics filled with golden galleons, bleached skulls, buried treasure, dirks and cutlasses. A real treat for the whole family from the man who literally wrote the book on swashbuckler cinema. Silent with music score. (1926) 132 min.
Order No: 780 Price: \$49.95

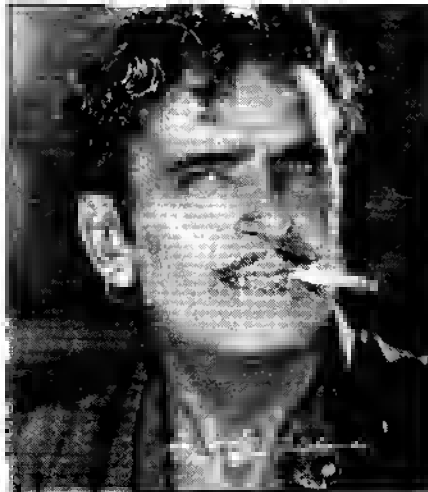
THE MARK OF ZORRO Over 150 years ago, a champion arose in Spanish California to defend the oppressed with his flashing sword. Fairbanks Sr. plays the dual role of brave costumed hero and foppish aristocrat to the limit, also performing most of his own stunts. A must for all adventure filmfans. Silent with music score. (1920) 142 min.
Order No: 775 Price: \$49.95



DON Q, SON OF ZORRO Swashbuckling adventure and romance with Fairbanks playing not one but two roles: Zorro, the legendary masked avenger, and Zorro's energetic son, Cesar de Vega a.k.a. "Don Q." Fairbanks, already in his forties, performs with the devil-may-care charm that made him famous. Also with Mary Astor, Warner Oland and Donald Crisp. (1925) 148 min.
Order No: 971 Price: \$49.95

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF DON JUAN An irresistibly charming tale, directed by Alexander Korda full of sexy romance, light comedy and swashbuckling adventure, this was the 50 year-old Fairbanks' final screen appearance. With Merle Oberon and Binnie Barnes. (1934) 87 min.
Order No: 41 Price: \$29.95

REACHING FOR THE MOON This unusual Douglas Fairbanks film opens with the camera flowing through a brilliantly-constructed miniature city, and into one of the film's many elegant art deco interiors designed by the great William Cameron Menzies. Fairbanks plays a brash financier and Bebe Daniels plays a renowned aviatrix who wants to win his heart and then cut him down to size. Wonderfully risqué dialogue plus Edward Everett Horton, Bing Crosby and a musical score by Irving Berlin highlight Unusual Depression-era entertainment. (1931) 72 min.
Order No: 378 Price: \$29.95



These Fairbanks Classics
are now Available to you on
Video through FILMFAI!

Specialty Priced \$29.95
Now as Low as Each

MR ROBINSON CRUSOE In a variation of the familiar Daniel DeFoe classic, a wealthy sportsman (Fairbanks) bets \$1,000 he can live on a primitive tropical island for one month with none of the creature comforts. Shot as a silent film with titles, but released as a sound feature with music and haunting sound effects, but no lip-synch dialogue. Highly recommended. (1932) 70 min.
Order No: 38 Price: \$29.95

THE MYSTERY OF THE LEAPING FISH and CHESS FEVER A real collector's item for Fairbanks' fans. The first half of this double bill, *Leaping Fish*, was one of Fairbanks' earliest credits. Taken from a story by Tod Browning, Doug plays "Coke Ennyday," a great "scientific detective" who spends his day eating, sleeping, drinking and doping. The second short, *Chess Fever*, is a Russian-made parody of chess championships. Two outrageous social satires. Silent with music. (1916-1925)
Order No: 1160 Price: \$29.95

THE MATRIMANIAC Doug Fairbanks and Constance Talmadge star in this light-weight comedy about a boy determined to marry his fair lady, no matter what her father says. Includes a terrific chase scene with a train, hand-car, mule and other crazy transports, which highlight Fairbanks' last film for Triango before founding his own production company. Silent with music score. (1916) 75 min.
Order No: 961 Price: \$29.95

HIS PICTURE IN THE PAPERS Fairbanks plays the nonconformist son of a health food tycoon who must get his picture in the paper to gain the hand of his lady love. He tries driving his car off a cliff, entering a boxing match and much, much more. One of the earliest Fairbanks films shot in NYC. A delightful, frothy all-American comedy. Silent film with music score. (1916) 68 min.
Order No: 1126 Price: \$29.95

REACHING FOR THE MOON (Note: no connection with the Fairbanks 1931 sound film of the same name.) Fairbanks stars as Alexis Caesar Napoleon Brown, a young button factory worker whose imagination matches his enthusiasm. His girl wants him to get married, but he wants to be king. Through a bizarre twist of circumstances, he gets his wish, but soon learns that the job isn't all it's cracked up to be. Silent w/ music score. (1917) 91 min.
Order No: 1130 Price: \$29.95



WILD AND WOOLY Fast moving witty spoof of westerns starring Fairbanks in one of his most likable roles. As Jeff, the son of a railroad tycoon who lives and breathes the rugged frontier life of a cowboy. Unfortunately, he lives in Manhattan, but his fantasy comes true when his father sends him to Arizona to determine if a railroad should be built there. Although the film begins as a wry comment on the folly of escaping into a fantasy world, it ends up reaffirming the idea. An extremely enjoyable and clever satire. Silent film with music score. (1917) 90 min.
Order No: 152 Price: \$29.95



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To Purchase Any of these Videos, See Special Order Form on Page 93



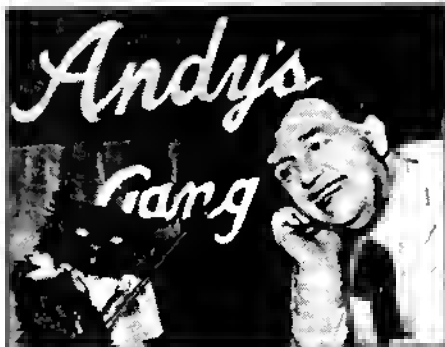
Ernie Kovacs

KOVACS ON THE CORNER One of Ernie Kovacs' first series for NBC (WPTZ-TV Philadelphia origination) containing some visual gems by the master of the video blackout. Written and produced by Ernie Kovacs and with Edythe Adams, The Dave Appel Trio and Alfred the Dog. Highly creative video comedy. (1952) 30 min. Order No: 594 Price: \$19.95

THE ERNIE KOVACS SHOW This classic episode called "Eugene," written, produced and directed by Kovacs, contained no talking—none in the Dutch Masters commercials, none in the notous skits about exaggerated sound effects in a men's club, a hall of statues and a tilted room where the law of gravity takes an unusual turn—only music and sound. An early, innovative (and very funny) use of video tape. Recommended. (11/24/61 ABC-TV) 29 min. Order No: 1057 Price: \$19.95

TAKE A GOOD LOOK (with ERNIE KOVACS) Visually inventive panel show, hosted by Kovacs (including his usual outre' skits) featured panelists Edie Adams, Carl Reiner and Cesar Romero trying to guess mystery guests' secret. Kovacs described it as "a combination of Mah Jongg and Chug-A-Lug!" (1960/ ABC-TV) 30 min. Order No: 444 Price: \$19.95

DANGER A live "TV noir" series showing the dark side of the human soul. The three programs, "The Lady on the Rock," "Death Among the Relics," and "The System," were all directed by Sidney Lumet. (1951, 1952) 77 min. Order No: 389 Price: \$29.95



ANDY'S GANG Andy Devine, successor to Smilin' Ed McConnell, hosts this popular Saturday morning kids show, telling stories and introducing a harmonica playing orangutang. But the real star of the show was, "Froggy the Gremlin," who plunked his magic twanger and croaked, "Hi-ya, kids! Hi-ya! Hi-ya!" along with "Midnight the Cat" and "Squeaky the Mouse." (c. 1958, NBC-TV) 24 min. Order No: 522 Price: \$19.95

BLOOPER Fest

BLOOPERS from STAR TREK and LAUGH-IN Hilarious goofs, kidding around on the set, lun scenes, flubbed lines, pets on the fanny, limp wrists, etc. You get the idea. One of the funniest celebrity-filled programs that ever belly-laughed its way onto a videotape. Caution: contains some strong language. (1966, c.1970) 26 min. Order No: 574 Price: \$19.95

VidioOddities Presents "GTV"

This Special Selection of
"Golden Age" Television
is now Available to you on
Video through FILMFAAX!

Specialty Priced \$19.95
Now as Low as Each



ROCKY JONES, SPACE RANGER The complete three episode story of "The Cold Sun," starring Richard Crane, Scott Beckett and Sall Mansfield. A "trotanic missile" is needed to ignite the sun before it's too late! Produced on film at NBC. (1954) 79 min. Order No: 69 Price: \$29.95

ROCKY JONES, SPACE RANGER "The Pirates of Prah" in its complete three episodes. Space pirates from the planet Prah have struck, Rocky uses a "Cold Light" to make his spaceship invisible, then sets out to battle the interplanetary gang and their Lady Boss. (1954) 78 min. Order No: 70 Price: \$29.95

ROCKY JONES, SPACE RANGER In "Blast Off," Rocky and Bobby are space-wrecked on a planeoid where the natives worship them as gods. They find an ancient flying saucer and even a beautiful girl. Three complete episodes tell the whole story. (1954) 78 min. Order No: 71 Price: \$29.95

ROCKY JONES, SPACE RANGER Rocky is framed for space piracy on a distant planet. His crimes are described in flashback (film clips from previous episodes), and just when things look blackest in "The Trial of Rocky Jones," an earthquake strikes! Complete three episode story as seen on NBC-TV. (1954) 79 min. Order No: 72 Price: \$29.95

SPACE PATROL Three different "high-adventures-in-the-vast-reaches-of-space" starring Ed Kemmer and Lyn Osborn. First, alien creatures who can walk through walls invade the Solar System. Next, an Atomic Harmonizer threatens to shrink a whole city. Then, Buzz and Happy try to unravel the secret of a strange piece of metal discovered by 30th century archeologists. (1955) 78 min. Order No: 685 Price: \$29.95

VIDEO YESTERBLOP A collection of all those out-takes you weren't supposed to see on your television. (Caution: contains some strong language and a few naked ladies.) Includes: the famous *Price Is Right* broadcast in which a contestant's blouse falls off; the story of the Crunchbird; late obscene gestures; newsfilm boners; a naked lady in a fountain; "telepathic thought transmission"; and out-takes from *All My Children*, *One Day At A Time*, *Happy Days*, *Mork and Mindy* (you're not gonna believe these!) and plenty more. (1960s & '70s) 76 min. Order No: 766 Price: \$29.95



Foodini the Great—Pinhead

FOODINI THE GREAT TV pioneers Hope and Morey Bunin first brought their puppets to network TV in 1948 with a 15 minute 5-day-a-week series called *Lucky Pup*. The two most popular characters, Foodini and his bungling assistant Pinhead switched to a weekly half hour format in Aug. of '51. Foodini was a magician-cum-swami, hypnotist, mind reader, escape artist, and card trickster who performed actual magic tricks on-camera. (Autumn 1951, ABC-TV. Has a slightly noisy soundtrack) 22 min. Order No: 1244 Price: \$19.95

THE NUT HOUSE Produced by Jay Ward (*Rocky and Bullwinkle*) and written by Bob Arbogast (among others). A live TV series of skits that should have been a hit, but for some reason, never made it to the home screen. (Six years later, Rowan and Martin's very similar *Laugh-In*, was successful.) The actors are unknowns, but this show stands on the unique quality of its writing—and these skits are hilarious. Bravo *Nut House*. (1952 CBS-TV) 34 min. Order No: 247 Price: \$24.95

DUPONT SHOW OF THE MONTH ("TREASURE ISLAND") with BORIS KARLOFF Karloff, Hugh Griffith, and Richard O'Sullivan star in an elaborate production of Robert Louis Stevenson's rip-roaring pirate tale, "Treasure Island." Karloff plays the drunken old pirate, Billy Bones and even though this was a live presentation, the parrot stays put on Long John Silver's shoulder throughout the show! Remarkable, complex sets. (1950) 88 min. Order No: 1108 Price: \$29.95

DIVORCE HEARING If you're a fan of today's *Divorce Court*, you're going to love this 1958 version! Two couples, each facing divorce on the grounds of extreme cruelty, square off on camera and let loose with both barrels. Absolutely fascinating viewing—just like a neighbor's bedroom window. (1958) 27 min. Order No: 309 Price: \$19.95

SUPERBOY SCREEN TESTS This series of actor's auditions for an unsold *Superboy* series includes screen tests by young John Rockwell (who was chosen to appear in the never-aired pilot episode) and four hopeful teenage Lana Lang aspirants. Order No: 335 Price: \$19.95



Superboy Screen Tests

THE RETURN OF VIDEO YESTERBLOP From the creative, far-sighted, and looney Warner Brothers editors: bloopers, bleeps and bungles from Ronald Reagan, Humphrey Bogart and many other Warner's stars. Our former president's expletives when he flubbed a line made Reagan turn red, his leading lady went white and the director got blue in the face! How's that for colorful language? Includes "Blow-Ups of 1941," "Blow-Ups of 1946," "Blow-Ups of 1947," (1941-1947) 27 min. Order No: 1058 Price: \$19.95

ARCHIE This unsold pilot for a series based on the popular comic strip starred John Simpson and Roland Winters and predated the popular animated version, which eventually ran for 10 years on the networks. 'The Electric Cupid,' has Archie using a computer to match up the guys and gals for a big dance. All your favorite Archie characters (Jughead, Veronica, etc.) are here and the program also includes a 12 minute sales pitch for potential sponsors. (1964) 43 min. **Order No: 327 Price: \$24.95**

THE ALDRICH FAMILY In this excellent live tv production, Henry's upset because he hasn't received an invitation to a costume party. A poignant and warm comedy that made a successful transition from radio. The program was sponsored by Jello, Birds Eye Foods and Swans Down Cake Mixes and starred Jackie Kell, House Jameson, Lois Wilson and Robert Casey (1950) 27 min **Order No: 544 Price: \$19.95**

WATCH MR. WIZARD A whole generation was introduced to physics and chemistry with Mr. Wizard. In this show Don Herbert and his young visitor Susan study 'Explosions,' starting with bursting balloons and ending with the hydrogen bomb! One experiment realizes it was on live tv and fails to work, but the rest go off with a satisfying roar. One of the finest educational programs ever made. (1956) 30 min. **Order No: 808 Price: \$19.95**

DR. IO Jimmy McLain is the good doctor who gives away Silver Dollars for the correct answers to questions like 'Who wrote the quote, 'To err is human, to forgive divine?' George Ansbro kicks off the evenings lun with, 'I have a Lady in the Balcony, Doctor.' Early tv quiz fun. (1953) 30 min. **Order No: 512 Price: \$19.95**



Howdy Doody

PUPPET PLAYHOUSE PRESENTS HOWDY DOODY Two complete broadcasts from 1948 and 1959 featuring Buffalo Bob (Bob Smith), Clarabell the Clown (Bob Keeshan in 1948, probably Bob Nicholson in 1959), Chief Thundercloud and the rest of the gang. A delight for youngsters today as well as those who watch it live. Don't miss Buffalo Bob and Clarabell cracking up on camera leaving the Peanut Gallery trying to figure out what's so funny. A real tv classic (1948, 1959) 60 min. total. **Order No: 585 Price: \$24.95**

HOWDY DOODY Two more complete episodes of the world's most famous children's program. Clarabell shows movies of his trip to West Virginia. Princess SummerFall WinterSpring and Zippy the Chimp appear in the first show from 1953. They are also in the second episode from 1959 with guest Gabby Hayes. Don't miss the 'Howdy Doody Comic'—a limited animation cartoon serial. (1953, 1959) 49 min. **Order No: 652 Price: \$24.95**

THE \$64,000 QUESTION The best remembered show from the era of the Big Quiz. A Philippine-American lady lawyer decides to keep her \$32,000. Virgil Earp (nephew of Wyatt Earp) wins \$32,000 in the category of 'The Wild West,' and more. Hosted by Hal March, Questions by Dr. Bergen Evans, from out of the 'locked vault,' and the famous Revlon Isolation Booth. (1957) 29 min **Order No: 832 Price: \$19.95**

YOU ASKED FOR IT Two complete live tv 'Believe-It-Or-Not' format programs, with all the performers requested by the viewers. An elephant carries a man by his head, a musician plays three trumpets at the same time, a trick whip artist, the 'Living Mannequin,' and six kids who play the William Tell Overture on manbass (with hoofbeats!). Hey, don't blame us. You asked for it! (both 1954) 59 min. total. **Order No: 1170 Price: \$24.95**



Vincent Price

COLLECTOR'S ITEM: "LEFT FIST OF DAVID" A rare opportunity to see two masters in an unsold CBS-TV pilot. Peter Lorre and Vincent Price play a sinister pair of art dealers on the trail of the fabulous 'Left Fist of David,' whatever that may be. Made a few years before Lorre's death in 1964. (c. 1960) 27 min. **Order No: 634 Price: \$19.95**

THE MAGNAVOX THEATER Premier of the first full-length movie made for television, 'The Three Musketeers' Produced by Hal Roach, Jr., directed by Budd Boetticher, and starring Robert (Hideous Sun Demon) Clarke, John Hubbard, Mel Archer, and Marjorie Lord. Plenty of flashing swords and swashed buckles. (1950) 53 min. **Order No: 496 Price: \$24.95**

SEE IT NOW ("Automation") Edward R. Murrow set an example of excellence in the field of television documentaries. This particular program is an exploration of how 'automation' is changing the way America works and now computers and automatic machines are revolutionizing industry. Walter Reuther voices his concerns about workers being replaced by machines. The computers are primitive by today's standards, but the program is an intelligent exploration of a revolution that continues today. (1957) 82 min **Order No: 241 Price: \$29.95**

THE FAMILY GAME Three families compete in a program where the parents try to guess what their children had answered to leading questions asked when Mom and Dad were offstage. Bob Barker hosted this silly sendup and it's easy to see why it lasted only six months. (1967) 29 min. **Order No: 307 Price: \$19.95**

BEAT THE ODDS Warren Hull hosts this syndicated Los Angeles game show. Contestants play a word game with rotating letter wheels and a 'Mr. Whammie' to foil their luck. (1969) 22 min. **Order No: 325 Price: \$19.95**

THE QUIZ KIDS One of early tv's most famous programs broadcast live from Chicago. Fran Allison was the MC. Includes an atrocious live commercial. 'If you take a cup of coffee from a filled jar and transfer it to a filled milk jar, stir it, take 1 cup of the milk/coffee mixture from the mixed jar and put it in the coffee jar, how much liquid have you transferred?' Tune in for the answer. (1949) 30 min. **Order No: 480 Price: \$19.95**



RED NIGHTMARE Jack Webb stars in Warner Brothers' propaganda film, made for the Department of Defense, about the Red Menace conspiring to take over the American Way of life. An average guy finds out what life would be like under the Soviet system. Laughable today, but no joke in the McCarthy Era! (1953) 30 min. **Order No: 595 Price: \$19.95**

LUX VIDEO THEATRE The tv adaptation of 'To Have and Have Not,' from a screenplay by William Faulkner. Edmond O'Brien and Beverly Garland turn in stellar performances. Compressed into one hour and limited by set restrictions, this prestige program is a showcase for pros at work. (1957) 59 min. **Order No: 317 Price: \$24.95**

CAESAR'S HOUR One of the funniest series from the era of live tv comedy. Stars Sid Caesar, Carl Reiner, Howard Morris; Hugh Downs announces, and the writers included Mel Brooks and Neil Simon. Includes skits called 'The Commuters,' 'Reach for your Brains,' and 'Night-time.' (1957) 45 min. **Order No: 261 Price: \$24.95**

CAESAR'S HOUR It was the last show of the season and Caesar, along with his cast of regulars and guest stars, really conquered the audience with laughter. Our favorite voice man, Don Pardo, did the announcing and the show was written by Mel Brooks and Selma Diamond, among others. A creative finale to an all-star series. (1956) 52 min. **Order No: 814 Price: \$24.95**



THIS IS YOUR LIFE Ralph Edwards surprises Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy in this popular 1950s series. A heart-warming experience and an absolute must for Laurel and Hardy fans (even though Stan wasn't really very happy about it). (1954) 30 min. **Order No: 507 Price: \$19.95**

PERSON TO PERSON Here's proof that Edward R. Murrow could even get an interview out of someone who doesn't talk! Murrow, complete with his trademark cigarette, visits with Groucho and Harpo Marx in two selections from the popular CBS-TV series. Groucho ad-libs, introduces his cook and maid and plays the guitar. Harpo doesn't say a word, but he does play his harp. (From 1954 and 1958) 30 min. **Order No: 355 Price: \$19.95**

SHOWER OF STARS Big-time variety (1/8/55) as Groucho Marx brandishes his acid wit during this live TV broadcast. Also appearing are host William Lundigan, leggy Betty Grable, Ed Wynn, Danny Thomas, and others. Plus a preview of 'The Forward Look' lineup of '55 Chrysler. (Sorry, no tail fins yet.) 60 min. **Order No: 1181 Price: \$24.95**

SILVER THEATER A rare Chico Marx appearance in a situation comedy, 'Papa Romani.' (CBS-TV syndicated version retitled 'Hollywood Half Hour.') Also featuring Margaret Hamilton and William Frawley. Sploey in spots but worth it! (1950 or 1951) 25 min. **Order No: 314 Price: \$19.95**

NBC COMEDY HOUR A primo example of an all-star '50s variety show, unsophisticated yet appealing. Groucho Marx appears in a replay of the hilarious 'Gonzalez Gonzalez Interview.' Hostess Gale Storm ('My Little Margie') also welcomes Stan Freberg, Jonathan Winters, Ben Blue and others. Complete with commercials and lots of talent. (1956) 55 min. **Order No: 803 Price: \$24.95**



MARIHUANA Fans of *Reefer Madness* will light up over this poorly acted, unabashedly bad melodrama. A high school teenager and her pals are befriended by a sharp pusher and soon all get turned on to 'giggie weed' at a beach party. One girl throws up, another gets pregnant, and all eventually sink lower and lower into a cesspool of depravity and crime. Wow! Be sure to take a toké off this campy delight. (1936) 57 min.

Order No: 1109 Price: \$24.95

REEFER MADNESS (Tell Your Children) A pristine print of this cult classic belongs in everyone's video library. A fictionalized 'true' story of the horrors of marijuana, 'that violent narcotic, the unspeakable scourge of the nation's youth.' (c. 1938) 67 min.

Order No: 584 Price: \$29.95

THE TERROR OF TINY TOWN By the time you're done watching this oddball oddity about 'Half-Pints in Ten Gallon Hats,' you probably won't remember if there was a story in it or not. Funny thing, though, about this all-midget western. All the props and Tiny Town sets are normal scale, so our bite-size bronco-busters seem to be packing gigantic six-shooters, and go under the saloon's swinging doors instead of through them! But, don't let your better judgment sell this film short. (1938) 63 min.

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TOMORROW'S CHILDREN This camp classic actually implies that sterilization isn't really all that bad, as long as the right people go under the knife. Fer sure! The film portrays the blind tyranny of doctors, welfare workers and judges who force people to submit to the operation. For example, one nice young girl, about to marry, is tagged because the state learns that her entire family consists of drunkards, cripples and idiots. So whose doesn't? Anyway, it's a wonderful companion piece for *Reefer Madness* and *Sex Madness*. (1934) 55 min.

Order No: 176 Price: \$24.95



MANIAC 'Unhealthy thought creates warped attitudes which in turn creates criminals and maniacs!' Or so says Dwan! Esper, the mastermind behind this twisted little curio. At one point, he has his 'Maniac' gouge the eyeball out of a cat and pop it into his mouth, like a tasty hors d'oeuvre. Supposedly based on Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Black Cat,' this sex-horror-exploitation quickie includes nudity and a shadowy rape scene. (1934) 51 min.

Order No: 1192 Price: \$24.95

LENNY BRUCE For hardcore comedy with a bite, sink your eye teeth into this live performance (August, 1965), starring the pit bull of comedy, himself. Filmed at San Francisco's Basin Street West, this was Bruce's only performance film. His irreverent and sometimes grotesque routine contains an occasional obscenity and remarks on his notorious New York State 'bust' 59 min.

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LASH OF THE PENITENTES This 'hidden camera' shockumentary explores the primitive 'ntes' of a bizarre subculture of religious zealots, the Penitentes of New Mexico. Watch as human beings submit to painful floggings! See living creatures buried alive! Witness ritual crucifixions! All accompanied by a heavy-handed, melodramatic narration. Caution: Edited down to its most sensational elements, this abridged version runs shorter than the original feature. (1936) 35 min.

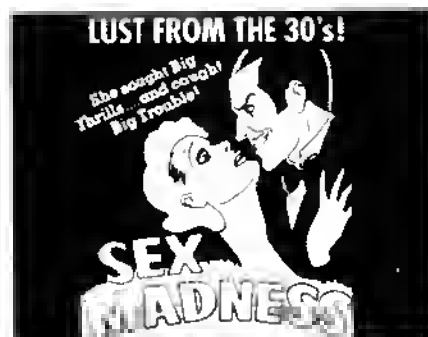
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WITCHCRAFT THROUGH THE AGES (Haxan) You've seen clips from this silent horror classic hundreds of times. Now own the complete, uncut Swedish version with all the black masses, torture, sexual perversions, satanic possessions, and witchcraft you can tolerate. Because of its explicit nudity, vulgarity and physically graphic images, this film has been banned in many countries. Written, directed, and starring (as Satan) Benjamin Christensen. Silent with music score. (1922) 113 min.

Order No: 274 Price: \$29.95

THE YOUNG AND THE DAMNED (Los Olvidados) Written and directed by Luis Buñuel (who collaborated with Salvador Dalí three decades earlier on *Un Chien Andalou*). With this brilliant work, the legendary Spanish filmmaker returned to international prominence after an absence of seventeen years. Winner of the Grand Prize for Direction at Cannes, it's a surrealistic portrait of the horrors of poverty, misery and degradation in the wretched slums of Mexico City. Spanish w/ English subtitles. (1950-Mexico) 79 min.

Order No: 269 Price: \$29.95



SEX MADNESS (They Must Be Told!) In the 1930s this was sizzling stuff! The point was to warn 'decent people' about the tragic consequences of syphilis—thus preventing ill-fated marriages, the break-up of families, and the procreation of congenitally deformed or diseased children. Then again, maybe the point was to make a sexploitation flick under the guise of a public service drama. You be the judge. Subtle as a sledgehammer, this depressing Depression classic is delightfully unsophisticated. (c. 1937) 53 min.

Order No: 589 Price: \$24.95

HOLLYWOOD REVELS It's time for a good old-fashioned burlesque show, complete with mediocre singers, baggy-pants comedians, sexy skits, and a bevy of beautiful babes who artistically remove their outer garments. Although mild by today's standards, this film is definitely for adults only. Featuring stripteasers Aileen Dupree, Mickey Lotus Wing, Hillary Dawn, and others. Music written and conducted by Billy Rose. (1947) 58 min.

Order No: 61 Price: \$24.95

TONIGHT FOR SURE If you thought *Dementia 13* was Francis Ford Coppola's first film, guess again. This unusual offering from the director of *The Godfather* films and *Apocalypse Now* was made while young Coppola was still attending UCLA. The story is set in 1961, 'somewhere on the Sunset Strip,' and has plenty of naked ladies 'doing their thing.' Not a stag film, but nevertheless, a true collectible for 'buff film' buffs. (1961) 66 min.

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GO! GO! GO! WORLD In the cinema verité tradition of *Mondo Cane*, this film lays bare even more 'primitive rites and civilized wrongs.' Touted as 'A Bold, Lusty Portrait of the Weird and Wicked Things that People do Around the World—Filmed On the Spot as it Happened!' this European shockumentary comes with the disclaimer: 'We Didn't Make the World—We Only Photographed It!' Technicolor and in English. (1964-Italy) 85 min.

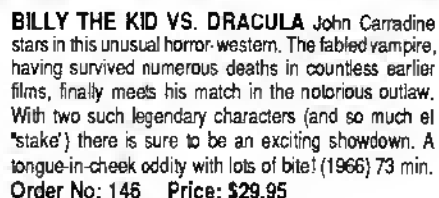
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WHERE THE GIRLS ARE Any army vet who still gets misty-eyed for boot camp will enjoy reliving that magic moment when he saw his first training film on the dangers of VD. Our hero is a clean-cut, girl-back-home-type, just beginning his first tour in Vietnam. When he doesn't hear from his sweetheart, the poor boy succumbs to the temptingly sexy women in a massage parlor. He got a towel; he got a girl; he got a dose! A moral lesson and a (boot) campy experience in living color. (1969) 23 min.

Order No: 149 Price: \$19.95

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ATROCITIES OF THE ORIENT It's WWII and the 'ruthless Japs' have taken over the Philippines, screaming 'Banzai' and perpetrating every atrocity imaginable: looting, torturing, raping, burning, bombing, bayoneting and beheading. An odd mix of romance, combat, propaganda and songs. A real 'racist' riot. (1959) 80 min.
Order No: 523 Price: \$29.95

THE ROAD TO RUIN Sally, an impressionable teenager, is led astray by her more experienced friend Eve in this early exploitationer about juvenile delinquency. After Sally becomes pregnant, her callous boyfriend arranges a coat-hanger abortion, then forces her into prostitution. More 'fun and shames' 1920s-style than you've ever seen in one film. Silent with music score. (1928) 57 min. **Order No: 1065 Price: \$24.95**

DEVIL'S WANTON This early work by famed Swedish director Ingmar Bergman poses its philosophical questions brilliantly, depicting a dark world of nihilistic poets, pimps and prostitutes, doomed to live out their lives in desperate state of confusion and despair. Watch for the surrealistic nightmare sequence. Existential exploitation at its best. In English (1949-Sweden) 78 min. **Order No: 270 Price: \$29.95**

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CAMOUFLAGE This WWII rarity, attributed to none other than Walt Disney, is an amusing, lesson in military camouflage—with a definite 'Slap-the-Jap' attitude. A real find for cartoon collectors. In color. (1943) 21 min.
Order No: 13 Price: \$19.95

WIZARD OF OZ Fourteen years before Judy Garland skipped down the yellow brick road, a pasty-faced comedian named Larry Semon directed, co-scripted and starred (as the Scarecrow) in this early surrealist version of L. Frank Baum's fantasy classic. Don't miss the performance by a remarkably thin, youthful, Oliver Hardy as the Tin Woodsman. Silent with music. (1925) 93 min. **Order No: 1206 Price: \$29.95**

BILL AND COO Come to Chirpendale, a burg populated entirely by birds, and take a beak at the budding romance between Bill, the struggling cabbie, and Coo, the daughter of the wealthiest 'man' in town. The plot dovetails until a heroic Bill finally bags his bird. Ken Murray narrates with plenty of comball puns, but we'll sparrow you the details as the story is nothing to crow about. It's the actors, all real, live, leather-molting love-birds, that literally keep this show singing. (1947) 58 min.

Order No. 1081 Price: \$24.95

SHIRLEY TEMPLE'S BABY BURLESKS The Depression's dimpled darling began her career at the age of four in these parodies of famous movie genres, featuring all-child casts of toddlers wearing adult clothing on the upper parts of their bodies and diapers (with gigantic safety pins) below. The satiric humor is actually quite sophisticated and Shirley, herself, called them 'the best things I ever did.' Including: 'Potty-Tix in Washington,' 'The Pie-Covered Wagon,' 'Glad Rags to Riches,' 'Kid in Hollywood,' 'Kid in Africa.' (1932-1933) 50 min. total. **Order No: 1007 Price: \$24.95**



GLEN OR GLENDA (I CHANGED MY SEX) Intended as a 'serious' study in transvestitism, this low-budget docudrama quickly becomes a parody of itself. In one of his campiest performances, an elderly Bela Lugosi introduces the story from a shadowy room decorated with skeletons, voodoo paraphernalia and WWII bomb casings. Director Ed Wood himself stars as the tortured 'angora sweater-loving' transvestite in this ludicrous, but lovable exploitation classic. 'Snips and sneils and puppy dog tails,' buy this video or land in jail! Also starring Wood's first wife Dolores Fuller. (1953) 64 min. **Order No: 740 Price: 29.95**

DETOUR Film noir was never better than in this dark melodrama about a piano player hitchhiking to California to visit his girl, only to be beaten down by the ironies of fate. Taut direction, hard-boiled dialogue, and good casting made this PRC programmer an absolute classic. There's murder, blackmail and unexpected plot twists all set in post-WWII America—back when even morality was still black and white. Directed by Edgar G. Ulmer and starring Tom Neal and Ann Savage. (1945) 69 min.
Order No: 949 Price: \$29.95

DELINQUENT DAUGHTERS The youth of America are running amok! A high school girl commits suicide and a cop and a reporter try to find out why she and so many other kids are straying from the straight and narrow. The answer seems to be at the Merry-Go-Round Club, a sort of teenage night club. Parents who don't understand, wartime conditions, plus some strong stuff from a hip flask all seem to add to the problem. Starring June Carlson and Fifi Dorsay. (1944) 71 min.
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An elegantly attired Steele in *Castle of Blood*.

BARBARA STEELE continued from 71

doctor, who is dashing and solicitous, manages a timely appearance to save Steele's life. Lucky girl.

Finally, completing this ultimate Steele vehicle, is the obligatory sex/violence scene. While a gardener named David is making love to the adulterous Muriel, her husband stealthily approaches with a raised poker and plants it in David's face. After the husband tortures, disfigures and electrocutes David and Muriel, he cuts out their hearts and burns their bodies. In the movie milieu, making love to Steele is a highly risky proposition.

Terror Creatures From the Grave (1965) is another example of how the union of direction, camera work, lighting and editing may achieve an eerie, compelling horror story on a low budget. To heighten the horror in scenes of crisis, director Massimo Pupillo uses subjective camera angles to represent centuries-old plague-spreaders returning from the dead. As the camera nears a victim, the shadow of the creature's hand is seen creeping over the victim's face. Pupillo's most memorable



A hot-tempered, gun metal Steele in *The Ghost*.

mis-en-scene, however, is a close-up shot of Steele's cadaverous face framed in a harp (seemingly sectioned by the harp's strings). She is a fallen angel, but still a poetic object of pity. Once again, Steele plays a treacherous adulteress who, this time, laughs madly in close-ups after her lover bludgeons her husband to death. Later, in a scorching lovemaking scene, she bites her own arm in a spasm of ecstasy. By any standard, this is hot stuff.

Steele's next role as Veronica in *She-Beast* (1966) is short, but she still manages to "steal" her few scenes. "Do you know the Dracula's, by any chance?" she casually asks Professor Van Helsing, a twinkle in her eye. The joking ceases once Veronica, an innocent tourist, is possessed by the spirit of a vengeful witch. The film's real interest, though, is its director, young Michael Reeves, who showed considerable promise as an *auteur* but tragically died at age 25 after making only three films. This is his first feature after proving



The sexy but satanic Steele in *Black Sunday*.

his abilities assisting director Luciano Ricci in making *Castle of the Living Dead* (1963). Reeves mixes humor, horror, and communism in a film that is more interesting than it was successful, but hinted at greater works to come.

In Camillo Mastrocinque's *An Angel for Satan* (1966), Steele provides the impetus for countless murders, and, believe it or not, is more overtly sexual than in any of her other films. Once again the victim of possession, Steele sets off to seduce, then destroy, the descendants of her original tormentors. In one scene she teasingly touches her breasts to entice a villager whom she later accuses of rape. She was in the mood for an execution. Unfortunately, most Steele fans have not had the opportunity to see this film, since it was unreleased in the United States and is rarely seen on television.

An Angel For Satan really marks the end of Steele's prolific and memorable horror cycle. Although she has taken small roles in a handful of subsequent horror films, many of these have been minor and inconsequential or, as in *The Crimson Cult* (1968), unforgivably disappointing.



A totally different Steele in *Nightmare Castle*.

Barbara Steele has professed a lack of enthusiasm for her status as a *Scream Queen* and with the generation of cult admirers that she spawned. When a French film magazine, *Midi-Minuit Fantastique*, honored Steele in 1965 with an award for her work in the horror genre, she accepted the award with a thanks bordering on anathema, quoted in *Scream Queens*: "I understand your enthusiasm on the subject of supernatural films. The supernatural attracts me, but not the films in which I play. I try to avoid these roles."

One can well understand her frustration. Besides the ten horror films Steele made between 1960 and 1966, she also appeared in at least twelve non-horror films in that period, including Federico Fellini's *8 1/2*, in which she has a major part as the bewitching enchantress Gloria Morin. Although Steele is a reluctant *Scream Queen*, well-meaning film enthusiasts have firmly affixed the crown to her head. For Barbara Steele, then, the burden of royalty seems unavoidable.

Videophiles: See *Sinister Cinema* ad on inside front cover for a comprehensive selection of Barbara Steele films now available on video.

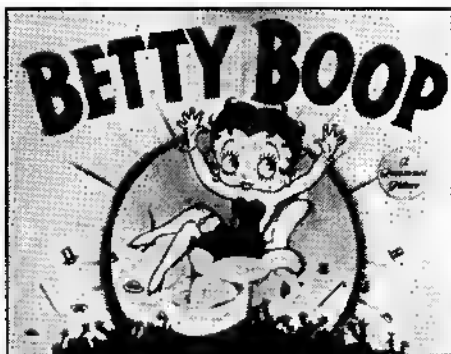


A sultry, very young, pre-*Black Sunday* Steele.



FELIX THE CAT: SOUND AND "SILENT" Even before Mickey the Mouse, there was Felix the Cat. Created by Patrick Sullivan before 1920, Felix's antics spanned both the silent and sound eras. Twelve cartoons, 6 sound, and 6 silent, include: *Polly-Tics*, *Felix Revolts*, *Felix Minds the Kids*, *In Dutch*, *Comicalamities*, *With the Cowboys*, *Tee Time*, *Forty Winks*, *Outdoor Indore*, *The Oily Bird*, *False Vases* and *Oceanatics*. (Mid-'20s-1930) 88 min. Order No. 1431 Price: \$29.95

IN A CARTOON STUDIO Founded in 1928, The Van Buren Studio, an offshoot of Paul Terry's Aesop's Fables Studio, went on to develop its own stable of characters. This rare sampling includes: *In a Cartoon Studio* (Making 'Em Move), *Cinderella Blues*, *The Ball Game*, *Galloping Hoofs* (Galloping Fanny), *Gay Gaucho*, *Redskin Blues*, *Happy Hoboes*, *Brownie's Victory Garden* (How's Crops), *Indian Whoopee*. (1931-1934) 60 min. Order No. 1419 Price: \$24.95



THE BEST OF BETTY BOOP Max Fleischer's big-eyed boop-boop-a-doop girl is back with a bang in *Betty Boop and Little Jimmy*, *The Funniest Living American*, *Be Human*, *Stop That Noise*, *Betty Boop with Henry*, *No, No! A Thousand Times No!*, *We Did It*, *Little Nobody*, *Betty Boop's Ker-Choo*, and *Betty Boop and the Little King*. Campy classics from the '30s. (1933-1936) 56 min. Order No. 201 Price: \$24.95

POPEYE THE SAILOR Included in this classic Dave Fleischer collection are three fully-animated, "stereoptical" two-reelers: *Popeye the Sailor Meets Sindbad the Sailor* (1936), *Popeye the Sailor Meets Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* (1937), and *Popeye the Sailor in Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp* (1939). Color. 54 min. total. Order No. 651 Price: \$24.95

CARTOON CLASSICS #1 An octette of rib-tickling jazzy toe-tappers from Warners and Vitaphone: *You Don't Know What You're Doin'*, *Freddy the Freshman*, *You're Too Careless with Your Kisses*, *Batling Bosko*, *It's Got Me Again*, *The Queen was in the Parlor*, *Moonlight for Two*, *Red Headed Baby*. (1931-1933) 56 min. Order No. 604 Price: \$24.95

CARTOON CLASSICS #2 More animated funny business with jazz and jokes from Warners and Vitaphone: *Scrap Happy Daffy*, *Yodeling Yokels*, *Porky Pig's Feat*, *Get Rich Quick, Porky*, *Smile, Dam Ya, Smile*, *One More Time*, *Porky's Preview*. (1931-1943) 51 min. Order No. 605 Price: \$24.95

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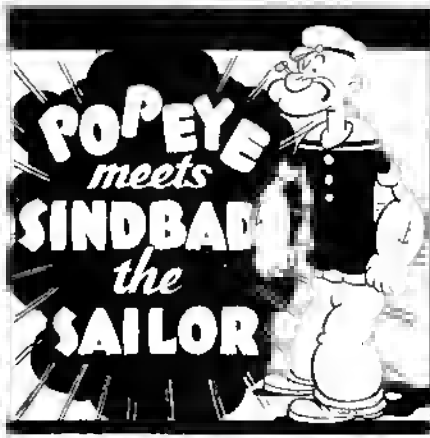
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role from Jackie Cooper in 1941 in *Henry Aldrich for President*. Continuing in the series of Aldrich pictures he made *Henry Aldrich, Editor*, *Henry Aldrich Haunts a House*, *Henry Aldrich Plays Cupid* and *Henry and Dizzy* with the future Lois Lane, Noel Neill. Lydon played opposite William Powell and Elizabeth Taylor in *Life With Father* in 1946. Later, Lydon had roles in *Out of the Storm*, *Joan of Arc*, and *Gasoline Alley*. Later roles were in *The Hypnotic Eye* (1960), *Death of a Gunfighter* (1969) and *Vigilante Force* (1976).

Although he has played numerous adult as well as juvenile leads, Jimmy Lydon also had a career behind the camera as an associate producer of a television series and numerous features, and also directed a number of television episodes. His rendering of the character Biffen Cordoza, a replacement for Scott Beckett's Winky, is one of cheerful, good-natured exuberance.

REGINALD SHEFFIELD

Veteran character actor Reginald Sheffield was hired for Rocky Jones to replace Cass, as an alternate scientist. Sheffield was born Reginald Sheffield Cassan on February 18, 1901, in London, England, and his first stage role was in the British production of "Peter Pan" in 1913. Sheffield made his film debut that same year, and in 1923 he was in *David Copperfield*. In 1927 he came to California to work in motion pictures and appeared seven years

later in *The House of Rothschild* with Boris Karloff, *Of Human Bondage* with Bette Davis, and in the first version of *The Buccaneer* (1938). 1939 awarded Sheffield with another fine character role, this time in *Gunga Din*, and in 1944 he made the first screen version of *The Man in Half Moon Street*. Sheffield went on to appear in *Captain Kidd* (1945), *Mr. Belvedere Goes to College* (1949) and *The Story of Mankind* (1957). His last film, in 1958, was *The Buccaneer*, a remake of the 1938 version he had appeared in. Reginald Sheffield died in his sleep on December 8, 1957, in Pacific Palisades, California. His son, Johnny Sheffield, played Boy in the MGM "Tarzan" series with Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan and later went on to star in his own series, "Bomba, The Jungle Boy" from Monogram and Allied Artists in the late 40s and early 50s.

ANN ROBINSON

Ann Robinson, who played Juliandra, Suzerain of the planet Herculon, was one of the youngest stuntwomen in the business at the time. Robinson performed stunts in Warner Brothers' TV series *Cheyenne* (starring Clint Walker). Her first dramatic role was in *A Place in the Sun* (1951) and she later enjoyed a prominent part in Warner Brothers' feature version of *Dragnet* (1954) based on the popular television and radio series. Robinson, however, is best remembered for her leading role in Paramount's 1953 production *War of the Worlds*, produced by George Pal.

During the '50s, Robinson free-lanced numerous television roles, among them Juliandra, with a dual role in *Rocky Jones* "Out of This World" episode, playing her evil twin sister. Of all the female aliens Rocky would encounter, Juliandra was the one most likely to have some sort of an adult relationship with him—but, of course, the situation never materialized.

JUDD HOLDREN

The character of Space Ranger office boy Higgins was played by the long-suffering Judd Holdren. Holdren (Commando Cody) was no stranger to either film or television fans of the 1950s. Holdren, born on October 16, 1915 in Iowa, first appeared in Sam Katzman's 1951 war drama *The Purple Heart Diary* for Columbia. He then appeared in the Columbia super-serial *Captain Video* with red-tinted sequences by Cinecolor. The next year he starred as Larry Martin in *Zombies of the Stratosphere* in which he donned the Rocketman suit. It was probably in 1952 that the *Commando Cody, Sky Marshal of the Universe* series was filmed. Interestingly enough, on the West Coast this was released as twelve episodic shows broadcast on Saturday mornings on NBC right after *Captain Midnight* in 1955. In the East in 1953, they were released as theatrical short subjects. Lobby cards and posters of these *Commando Cody* short subjects are still in existence, with their red lettering and muscular Commando Cody in a space suit that resembles neither Judd Holdren's nor the recycled 1949 *King of the Rocketmen* rocket suit.

After three episodes with William Shallert in the role of Ted, William Shallert dropped out of the cast and was replaced by none other than Richard Crane as another character named Dick, for the remainder of the twelve episodes. The *Commando Cody* featurettes were devoid of cliffhangers, leaving each episode with a conclusion unto itself. Also in 1952, Holdren had roles in *Lady In the Iron Mask* and *Gold Fever*. Holdren starred as "Fighting Rex Barrow" in the 1953 Columbia super-serial for Sam Katzman, *The Lost Planet. This is My Love* was his only feature entry in 1954, and in 1957 he contributed character acting once again in *The Amazing Colossal Man*. An ironic note is that Holdren's only new feature in 1958 was *The Buccaneer*, in which Reginald Sheffield makes his last appearance, and Charles Meredith makes a cameo appearance.

After acting until 1958, Judd Holdren reportedly sold real estate. Quite despondent with the way his life had been going, he left this planet on March 11, 1974 by committing suicide with a gun.



Above: The lovely Ann Robinson (not Anne Baxter) marches off to work in her Juliandra costume.

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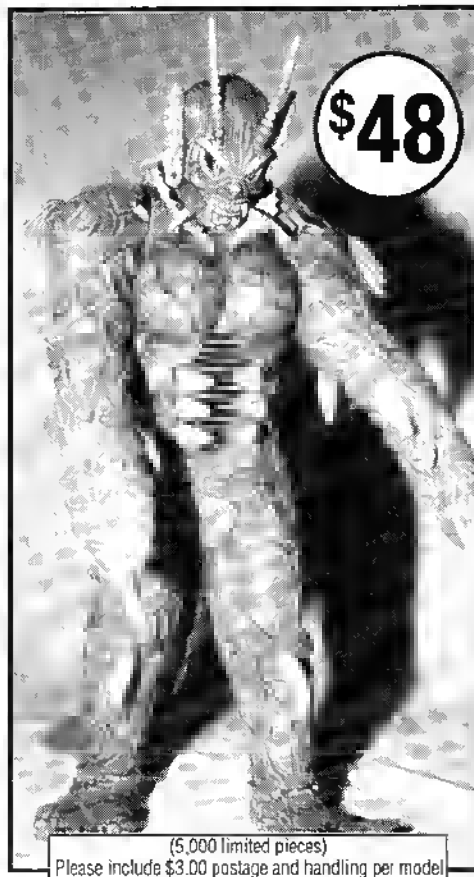
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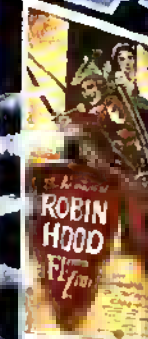
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